TRAVELS
IN
THE INTERIOR OF AMERICA,
IN THE
YEARS 1809,1810, AND 1811;

INCLUDING
A DESCRIPTION OF UPPER LOUISIANA,
TOGETHER WITH
THE STATES OF OHIO, KENTUCKY, INDIANA, AND TENNESSEE,
WITH THE
ILLINOIS AND WESTERN TERRITORIES,
AND CONTAINING
REMARKS AND OBSERVATIONS
USEFUL TO
PERSONS EMIGRATING TO THOSE COUNTRIES.

Second Edition

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PREFACE

WHEN I undertook to travel in Louisiana, it was intended that I should make New Orleans my principal place of residence, and also the place of deposit for the result of my researches. This intention I made known to Mr. Jefferson, during my stay at Monticello, when he immediately pointed out the want of judgment in forming that arrangement, as the whole of the country round New Orleans is alluvial soil, and therefore ill suited to such productions as were the objects of my pursuit. In consequence of his representations, I changed my intentions, and proceeded to St. Louis, one thousand four hundred miles above Orleans by the course of the Mississippi, where I employed myself, during the winter of 1810, in making such preparations as I deemed necessary for the preservation of what might be collected during the ensuing [vi] summer. In my subsequent journey up the Missouri, although every facility was afforded me that the nature of the expedition would allow, yet the necessity of conforming to the rules laid down to secure the safety of the party during the voyage, added to the known or supposed proximity of the hostile Indians, during a considerable part of our route, caused me to lose a great many opportunities, which, had my exertions been free, I should not have done. Besides these impediments, I lost the opportunity of collecting a great number of new plants on my return, through the breach of faith towards me by Mr. Lisa, who agreed that his boats should land me at different places; which promise he neither did, nor intended to, perform. For these reasons, I am persuaded that much yet remains to be done in that interesting country. When the whole of my collection was embarked on the Missouri, at the Aricara nation, it was extensive; but being then two thousand nine hundred miles from New Orleans, the losses by the way, and during my subsequent sickness at St. Louis, greatly diminished it. Immediately after my return to the United States, and before I could make any arrangement, either for my return to England, or for the publication of the plants I collected, the war broke out with this country:- I waited for its termination, and made some arrangements which caused a necessity for my stay some time longer.

[vii] I have made the above statement, because I think, that whoever undertakes a mission of the nature which I did, where the duty is to be performed in a wilderness, ought to give an account how he performed it, even in his own defence; as it often happens that men are found, who, from interested or malignant motives, will vilify his character. I had intended that this should have been accompanied by a description of the objects collected, that had not been before discovered; but on my return to England, I found that my design was frustrated, by my collection having been submitted to the inspection of a person of the name of Pursh, who has published the most interesting of my plants in an appendix to the *Flora Americae Septentrionalis*.

As my chief object has been to convey information and to write the truth, I have not been particular in the choice of words; if, therefore, the style meets with criticism, I shall neither be surprised nor disappointed. A catalogue of some of the more rare plants in the neighbourhood of St. Louis, and on the Missouri, is added, together with their habitats. To many it will be of no value; but as it may be of some use to naturalists who may visit those parts hereafter, I have thought proper to insert it. In what relates to the country west of the Alleghanies, I have been brief, because a more dilated [viii] account would have swelled the work much beyond the limits I had prescribed to myself. A second visit to those parts, in which my movements shall be less circumscribed, may enable me to give a more finished picture. In what has been said on those countries, I disclaim any design to encourage emigration; and may be credited in the assertion, because I can have no possible interest in promoting it. I have told the truth, and I can see no reason why it should have been suppressed.

Liverpool, August 1, 1817

SECOND EDITION

SHORTLY after the publication of the first Edition of this Work, Mr. Bradbury returned to America, and is now residing at St. Louis. The rapid sale of the first Edition, and its favourable reception by the Public, have induced the publication of a second, to which a Map of the United States has been added, carefully collated from the one published by Mr. Mellish.

Mr. Bywater's ingenious speculations on *animalculae*, which were published in the first Edition, in a letter addressed by him to Mr. Bradbury, are omitted in the second, at the request of the author, who, on reconsidering the subject, wishes to make some alterations, that he does not feel himself at liberty to publish in Mr. Bradbury's Work, without previously consulting him.

Liverpool, 1819.

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ON the 31st December, 1809, I arrived at St. Louis, in Upper Louisiana; intending to make that town or neighbourhood my principal place of residence, whilst employed in exploring the interior of Upper Louisiana and the Illinois Territory, for the purpose of discovering and collecting subjects in natural history, either new or valuable. During the ensuing spring and summer, I made frequent excursions alone into the wilderness, but not farther than eighty or a hundred miles into the interior. In the autumn of 1810, I dispatched for Orleans, in seven packages, the result of my researches; but had the mortification, soon after, to hear that the boat containing my collection had been driven ashore and damaged, on an island near St. Genevieve, sixty miles below St. Louis. As soon as I received this information I went thither, but learned that the boat had been repaired, and had [18] proceeded on her voyage. On my return to St. Louis, I was informed that a party of men had arrived from Canada, wit an Intention to ascend the Missouri, on their way to the Pacific Ocean, by the same route that Lewis and Clarke had followed, by descending the Columbia River. I soon became acquainted with the principals of this party, in whom the manners and accomplishments of gentlemen were united with the hardihood and capability of suffering, necessary to the backwoodsmen. As they were apprised of the nature and object of my mission, Mr. Wilson P. Hunt, the leader of the party, in a very friendly and pressing manner invited me to accompany them up the River Missouri, as far as might be agreeable to my views. I had intended to remove from St. Louis to Ozark, (or more properly Aux-arcs) on the Arkansas, and to spend the remaining summer on that river; but considering this opportunity for exploring the Missouri too valuable to be lost, I gladly accepted the invitation, to which an acquaintance with Messrs. Ramsey Crooks and Donald M'Kenzie, also principals of the party, was no small inducement. As it would not be practicable to ascend the Missouri until the breaking up of the ice in spring, Mr. Hunt concluded, that to avoid the expense of supporting his party at St. Louis, it would be better to station them during the winter on some part of the Missouri, at a considerable [19] distance above its mouth, as, at any point on that river above the settlements, five or six hunters can easily provide for forty or fifty men. The party therefore quitted St. Louis, and proceeded to the mouth of the Naduet, which falls into the Missouri 450 miles from the Mississippi. In the beginning of March Mr. Hunt returned to St. Louis in a boat with ten oars, and on the morning of the 12th, having completed his arrangements, he again embarked for the Missouri. As the post was expected to arrive the morning following, I put my trunks on board the boat, and determined to wait until that time, and meet the party at St. Charles. I must here observe, that the post to St. Louis is dispatched from Louisville, in Kentucky, a distance of more than 300 miles, through a wilderness, and from various causes is often retarded for several weeks, as had been the case at that period. In the evening I was informed by a gentleman in St. Louis, that a writ for debt had been taken out against Dorion, (whom Mr. Hunt had engaged as interpreter) by a person whose object was to defeat the intentions of the voyage. Knowing that the detention of Dorion would be of serious consequence to the party, I left St. Louis at two O'clock the following morning, in company with a young Englishman of the name of Nuttall, determined to meet the boat previous to its arrival at St. Charles, which I effected; and Dorion was sent into the woods, [20] his squaw accompanying him. We arrived at St. Charles about noon, and soon after Mr. Samuel Bridge, a gentleman from Manchester, then living at St. Louis, arrived also, with letters for me from Europe, the post having come in as was expected. We slept on board the boat, and in the morning of the 14th took our departure from St. Charles, the Canadians measuring the strokes of their oars by songs, which were generally responsive betwixt the oarsmen at the bow and those at the stem: sometimes the steersman sung,and was chorused by the men.[1] We soon met with Dorion, but [21] without his squaw, Whom it was intended should accompany us. They had quarrelled, and he had [22] beaten her, in consequence of which she ran away from him into the woods, with a child in her arms, and a large bundle on her back. A Canadian of the name of St. Paul was sent in search of her. The day was very rainy, and we proceeded only nine miles, to Bon Homme Island, where we encamped, and St. Paul arrived, but without the squaw. I observed in the broken banks of this island, a number of tuberous roots, which the Canadians call *pommes de*

terre. They are eaten by them, and also by the Indians, and have much of the consistence and taste of the Jerusalem artichoke: they are the roots of *glycine apios.*

15th.- About two hours before day, we were hailed from the shore by Dorion's squaw, who had been rambling all night in search of us. She was informed, that we would cross over to her at daybreak, which we did, and took her on board. I walked the greater part of this day on the north side of the river, which is partly bounded by rocks of secondary lime-stone; at the foot of which I observed crystals of quartz and calcarious spar, or carbonate of lime. We encamped opposite the remains of the village of St. Andrew, which is now abandoned.

16th.- We this day passed the Tavern Rocks, so called from a large cave therein, level with the [23] surface of the river. These rocks are nearly three hundred feet high, and are of the same nature as those we passed yesterday, but more abundantly filled with organ remains, consisting of *anomiae* and *entrochii*. 0 the islands which we passed there is abundance of *equisetum hyemale*, called rushes by the settlers, by whom this plant is held in high estimation, on account of its affording winter food for their cattle. On the first settlement of Kentucky, the borders of the river were found to be thickly set with cane, (*arundinaria macrosperma* of Michaux) and it was one of the strong. est inducements with the first settlers to fix on a spot if cane was abundant. On the Missouri, the rushes are equally valuable, affording to the first settler winter food for his cattle for several years, after which they perish, being destroyed if fed on during the winter. We this night arrived at Point L'Abaddie, where we encamped.

17th.- Early this morning I walked along the river, and was much struck with the vast size to which the cotton wood tree[2] grows. Many of those which I observed this day exceed seven feet in diameter, and continue with a thickness very little diminished, to the height of 80 or go. feet, where the limbs commence. After breakfast, we [24] crossed to the north side of the river, and in the afternoon landed at a French village, name Charette. In the woods surrounding this place I observed a striking instance of the indolence of the inhabitants. The rushes in the neighbourhood had been already destroyed by the cattle, and from the neglect of the owners to provide winter food for their horses, they had been reduced to the necessity of gnawmg the bark off the trees, some hundreds of which were stripped as far as these animals could reach. The cotton wood, elm, mulberry, and nettle trees (celtis crassifolia) suffered the most. On leaving Charette, Mr. Hunt pointed out to me an old man standing on the bank, who, he informed me, was Daniel Boone, the discoverer of Kentucky. As I had a letter of introduction to him, from his nephew Colonel Grant, I went ashore to speak to him, and requested that the boat might go on, as I intended to walk until evening. I remained for some time in conversation with him. He informed me, that he was eighty-four years of age; that he had spent a considerable portion of his time alone in the back woods, and had lately returned from his spring hunt, with nearly sixty beaver skins.

On proceeding through the woods, I came to the river Charette, which falls into the Missouri about a mile above the village, and was now much swelled by the late rains. As the boat had disappeared behind an island, and was at too great a distance to [25] be hailed, I got across by swimming, having tied my clothes together, and inclosed them in my deer skin hunting coat, which I pushed before me. I overtook the boat in about three hours, and we encamped at the mouth of a creek called Boeuf, near the house of one Sullens.

I enquired of Sullens for John Colter, one of Lewis and Clarke's party, whom General Clark had mentioned to me as being able to point out the place on the Missouri where the petrified skeleton of a fish, above forty feet long, had been found. Sullens informed me that Colter lived about a mile from us, and sent his son to inform him of our arrival; but we did not see him that evening.

18th.- At day-break Sullens came to our camp, and informed us that Colter[3] would be with us in a [26] few minutes. Shortly after he arrived, and accompanied us for some

miles, but could not give me [27] the information I wished for. He seemed to have a great inclination to accompany the expedition; [28] but having been lately married, he reluctantly took leave of us. I walked this day along the bluffs, [29] which were beautifully adorned with *anemone hepatica*. We encamped near the lower end of Lutre (Otter) Island.

The 19th commenced and continued rainy.- When we had passed the lower settlements, we began to see the river and its borders in a state of nature. The rushes, *equisetum hyemale*, were so thick and tall, that it was both painful and difficult to walk along, even at a very slow pace.

20th.- The river on the south side, during this day's travel, is mostly bounded by bluffs, or rocks, of whitish limestone: their appearance is very picturesque; the tops are crowned with cedar, and the ledges and chinks are adorned with *mespilus Canadensis*, now in flower. We encamped this night seven miles above the mouth of Gasconade River.

21st.- The rain, which had been almost incessant since our departure from St. Charles, had now ceased.

[30] I went ashore, after breakfast, intending to walk along the bluffs, and was followed by Mr. Nuttall. We observed that the boat immediately passed over to the other side of the river, on account of its being more easy to ascend. As this sometimes happened several times in a day, we felt no concern about it, but proceeded on our researches. In the forenoon we came to a creek or river, much swelled by the late rains: I was now surprised to find that Mr. Nuttall could not swim. As we had no tomahawk, nor any means of constructing a raft, and were certain that the boat was before us, we looked for no alternative but to cross the creek by fording it. We therefore continued to ascend, and in about half an hour arrived at a place where a tree had fallen in on the opposite side of the river, which reached about half way across it. I stripped, and attempted to wade it, but found it impracticable. I then offered to take Nuttall on my back, and swim over with him; but he declined, and we continued our route. About a league further up, we found a raft of drift-wood, which had been stopped by a large tree that had fallen into the river; this we crossed and with some difficulty overtook the boat. We arrived at a French village, called Cote sans Dessein, about two miles below the mouth of Osage River. After we had formed our camp, the interpreter went into the village, where he had some acquaintance. On his return, he informed us that [31] there was a war party of Indians in the neighbourhood, consisting of the Ayauwais, Potowatomies, Sioux, and Saukee nations, amounting to nearly three hundred warriors.

He had learned, that this party were going against the Osages; but having discovered that there was an Osage boy in the village, they were waiting to catch and scalp him. He also informed us, that we might expect to fall in with other war parties crossing the Missouri higher up. This was unpleasant news to us, as it is always desirable that white men should avoid meeting with Indian war parties: for if they are going to war, they are generally associated in larger parties than can subsist by hunting, from which they refrain, to prevent being discovered by their enemies, wherefore they are almost certain to levy contributions of provisions or ammunition on all they meet. When they return from war, the danger is still greater; for, if successful, they often commit wanton ravages; and if unsuccessful, the shame of returning to their nation without having performed any achievement, often induces them to attack those whom they would, in other circumstances, have peaceably passed. As we were sixteen men, well armed, we were determined to resist any act of aggression, in case of a rencontre with them.

22nd, 23rd, and 24th.- Almost incessant rain. Our bread was now becoming very mouldy, not [32] having been properly baked. Mr. Hunt anxiously waited for a fine day to dry it, together with the rest of the baggage.

25th.- Met a boat with sixteen oars coming from Fort Osage to St. Louis, for supplies: news had arrived at the fort, that the Great Osages had lately killed an American at their village.

26th.- It rained nearly the whole of this day: the flats near the river still continue to be so thickly covered with rushes, that it is almost impossible to travel over them.

27th.- The north bank of the river now assumes a most interesting appearance: it consists of a range of rocks, nearly perpendicular, from 150 to 300 feet high; they are composed of a very white limestone, and their summits are covered to the edge with cedar.

The length of this range is about six miles, and at the upper end they assume a semi-circular form. These are called the Manitou Rocks, a name given to them by the Indians, who often apply this term Manitou to uncommon or singular productions of nature, which they highly venerate. On or near these Manitous, they chiefly deposit their offerings to the Great Spirit or Father of Life. This has caused some to believe that these Manitous are the objects that they worship; but this opinion is erroneous. The Indians believe that the [33] Great Spirit either inhabits, or frequently visits, these manifestations of his power; and that offerings deposited there, will sooner attract his notice, and gain his auspices, than in any other place. These offerings are propitiatory, either for success in war or in hunting, and consist of various articles, of which the feathers of the war eagle (falco melanoetos) are in the greatest estimation. On these rocks several rude figures have been drawn by the Indians with red paint: they are chiefly in imitation of buffaloe, deer, &c. One of these, according with their idea of the Great Spirit, is not unlike our common representation of the devil. We encamped this night a little above the mouth of the Bonne Femme, a small river on the north side, where the tract of land called Boone's Lick settlement commences, supposed to be the best land in Western America for so great an area: it extends about 150 miles up the Missouri, and is near fifty miles in breadth.

28th.- I left the boats early, intending to walk to the Lick settlements, which are the last on the river, excepting those occupied by one or two families near Fort Osage. After travelling eight or ten miles, I was surprised in the woods by a severe thunder storm. Not knowing whether I could reach the settlements before night, I returned to meet the boat, and found our two hunters, who [34] had sheltered themselves in a hollow tree: they had killed a buck, on a part of which we dined, and carried the remainder to the boat, and soon after we arrived at the first house, belonging to a planter named Hibband. This evening we had a most tremendous thunder storm; and about nine o'clock, a tree, not more than fifty yards from our camp, was shivered by lightning. Mr. Hunt, Mr. Nuttall, and myself, who were sitting in the tent, sensibly felt the action of the electric fluid.

29th.- As Mr. Hunt had some business with one of the settlers, we walked to his house, where we heard that war had already commenced between the Osages and the confederate nations, and that the former had killed seven of the Ayauways. This determined us to continue our practice of sleeping on our arms, as we had done since the 21St. We slept this night about a league above the settlements.

30th.- We were now beyond all the settlements, except those at Fort Osage, and Mr. Hunt resolved to send the hunters out more frequently, as game might now be expected in abundance. I accompanied them, and we killed a buck and a doe. I found the country, three or four miles from the river, very broken or stony. The almost incessant rains had now raised the Missouri to within a few [35] feet of its annual flood, which rendered the navigation very difficult.

31st.-The morning was rainy, and was succeeded by a strong north wind, which caused a sudden change in the temperature of the weather: the 30th had been warm, but this night the water, in a tin cup of a pint measure, that had been left full in the boat, was found to be nearly all solid ice on the morning of the first of April.

April 1st.- After breakfast I went ashore with the two hunters, Harrington and Mears, but soon separated from them in order to visit the bluffs. In the evening I descended into the valley, and on my way to find the boat, observed a skunk[4], (*Viverra mephitis*) and being desirous of procuring the skin, fired at it, but with shot only, having that day [36] taken out

my fowling-piece instead of my rifle. It appeared that I had either missed entirely, or only slightly wounded it, as it turned round instantly, and ran towards me. Being well aware of the consequence if overtaken, I fled, but was so closely pursued, that I was under the necessity of re-loading whilst in the act of running. At the next discharge I killed it; but as it had ejected its offensive liquor upon its tail, I could not touch it, but cut a slender vine, of which I made a noose, and dragged my prize to the boat. I found that the Canadians considered it as a delicacy, and were desirous of procuring it to eat: this enabled me to obtain the skin without having to perform the disgusting operation of taking it off myself. Soon after my arrival, Harrington came in, and brought the intelligence that they had killed a large bear about four miles off. He had left Mears engaged in skinning it, and came to request that one or two men might be sent to assist in fetching it in. As it was near night, Mr. Hunt determined to stop, and two of the Canadians were sent along with Harrington; I also accompanied them. Although our course lay through a very thick wood, Harrington led us with great precision towards the place, and when he supposed himself near it, he stopped, and we gave a shout. In a few seconds afterwards we heard the discharge of a rifle, and also a shout from Mears, who was within two hundred [37] yards of us. On joining him we were surprised to find that he had two bears. He informed us, that after the departure of Harrington he re-loaded his rifle, and laid it beside him whilst he was skinning and cutting up the bear: he had nearly completed this operation, when he heard a rustling, as if an animal was coming towards him. To defend himself, he seized his piece, and at the moment we shouted, a bear appeared in view. Not seeing Mears, he laid his fore paws on the trunk of a fallen tree, and turned his head to look back. Mears could not have wished for a better opportunity; he shot him through the head. The bears were very large, and as the night had set in before the latter was skinned and cut up, it was too late to send to the boat for assistance: I therefore offered to carry a part, provided they would allot to me the skins, as they were the only clean part of the spoil. This proposition was agreed to, and we set out. Before we had proceeded far, it became quite dark, which caused us to take a wrong direction, that led to a swamp. In addition to our difficulties, the underwood consisted chiefly of the prickly ash, (*zanthoxylon clava Hercules*) by which our faces and hands were continually scratched: there was also an abundance of small prickly vines entwined among the bushes, of a species of *smilax*. These were easily avoided during [38] day-light, but they were now almost every instant throwing some of us down. Whilst we were deliberating whether it would not be advisable to stop, make a fire, and remain there during the night, we heard the report of a gun, which we thought proceeded from the boat: we therefore steered our course in the direction of the sound. Shortly afterwards we perceived before us a light glimmering through the trees, and in less than half an hour we had a full view of it. Mr. Hunt, from our long delay, had become apprehensive of what had really happened, viz. that we had lost our way, and having observed near the camp a very large cotton-wood tree, which was dead, and evidently hollow, he caused a hole to be cut into the cavity near the root, and a quantity of dry weeds being put in, it was set on fire. The trunk was at least seventy or eighty feet in length before the broken limbs commenced; several of these projected eight or ten feet, and were also hollow. The flames, impelled by so long a column of rarefied air, issued from the top, and from the ends of the limbs, with a surprising force, and with a noise equal to that of a blast furnace. Although smarting with pain, weary, wet, and hungry, not having eaten any thing since morning, I sat down to enjoy the scene, and have seldom witnessed one more magnificent. On relating to the hunters this evening that I had [39] been pursued by a skunk, they laughed heartily, and said it was no uncommon thing, having been often in the same predicament themselves.

2nd.- We this day passed the scite of a village on the north-east side of the river, once belonging to the Missouri tribe. Four miles above it are the remains of Fort Orleans, formerly belonging to the French; it is 240 miles from the mouth of the Missouri." We passed the mouth of La Grande Riviere, near which I first observed the appearance of prairie[5] on the alluvion of the river. Our hunters went out, but soon returned without attempting to kill any thing, having heard some shots fired, which they discovered proceeded from Indians in pursuit of elk. The navigation had been very difficult for some days, on account of the frequent occurrence of, what is termed by the boatmen, *embarras*.

They are formed by large trees falling into the river, where it has undermined the banks. Some of these trees remain still attached by their [40] roots to the firm ground, and the drift-wood being collected by the branches, a dam of the length of the tree is formed, round the point of which the water runs with such velocity, that in many instances it is impossible to stem it. On account of these obstacles, we were frequently under the necessity of crossing the river. This day the carcases of several drowned buffaloes passed us.

3rd.-I walked the greatest part of the day, but found it troublesome, being much annoyed by the prickly ash. In the evening we had another severe thunder storm.

4th.-The navigation became less difficult, as the river had fallen four feet.

5th.-Went out with the hunters, who shot nothing but a goose, (anas Canadensis) that was sitting on a tree beside its nest, in which was the female. Observed for the first time that the rocks bordering the river were sandstone. In these I found nodules of iron ore imbedded.

6th.-Walked all day, and in the afternoon -met the hunters, who had found a bee tree,[6] and were [41] returning to the boat for a bucket , and a hatchet to cut it down. I accompanied them to the tree. It con tained a great number of combs, and about three gal lons of honey. The honey bees have been introduced into this continent from Europe, but at what time I have not been able to ascertain. Even if it be admitted that they were brought over soon after the first settlement took place, their increase since appears astonishing, as bees are found in all parts of the United States; and since they have entered upon the fine countries of the Illinois and Upper Louisiana, their progress westward has been surprisingly rapid. It is generally known in Upper Louisiana, that bees had not been found westward of the Mississippi prior to the year 1797.[7] They are now found as high up the Missouri as the Maha nation, having moved westward to the distance of 600 miles in fourteen years. Their extraordinary progress in these parts is probably owing to a portion of the country being prairie, and yielding therefore a succession of flowers during the whole summer, which is not the case in forests. Bees [42] have spread over this continent in a degree, and with a celerity so nearly corresponding with that of the Anglo-Americans, that it has given rise to a belief, both amongst the Indians and the Whites, that bees are their precursors, and that to whatever part they go the white people will follow. I am of opinion that they are right, as I think it as impossible to stop the progress of the one as of the other. We encamped this night at the bottom of an island.

7th.- This morning I went upon the island, accompanied by one of the Frenchmen named Guardepee, to look for game. We were wholly unsuccessful in our pursuit, although the island is of considerable extent. On arriving at the upper end of it, we perceived a small island, of about two acres, covered with grass only, and separated from the large one by a narrow channel, the mouth of which was covered with drift timber. We passed over, and walked through the grass, and having given up all hopes of game, we were proceeding to the river to wait for the boat, when my companion, who was before me, suddenly stopped, fired, and jumped aside, crying out, "*Voila, O diable, tirez*," at the same time pointing towards the grass a few steps before him. I looked, and saw a bear not five yards from us. I immediately fired, and we retired to a short distance to reload, but on our [43] return found the animal expiring. It was a female, with three small cubs in her bed, about two yards from where she was killed. She had heard us approach, and was advancing to defend them. I took one of the cubs in my arms. It seemed sensible of its misfortune, and cried at intervals. It was evident that whenever it uttered a cry, the convulsions of the dying mother increased, and I really felt regret that we had so suddenly cut the ties of so powerful an affection.[8] Whilst we breakfasted the bear was cut up, and, with the young ones, taken on board. We encamped this night about twelve miles below Fort Osage.

8th.- About ten o'clock we came in sight of the fort, about six miles distant. We had not been long in sight before we saw the flag was hoisted, and at noon we arrived, when we were saluted with a volley as we passed on to the landing place, where we met Mr. Crooks, who had come down from the [44] wintering station at the mouth of the river Naduet to meet us. There were also collected at the landing place about 200 Indians, men, women, and children, of the Petit Osage nation, whose village was then about 300 yards from the fort. We passed through them to pay our respects to Lieutenant Brownson, who then commanded in the absence of Captain Clemson. He received us very politely, and insisted that we should eat at his table during our stay. I had with me an introductory letter to Dr. Murray, physician to the garrison, whom I found disposed to give me every information relative to the customs and manners of the Osage nation, and from him also I received a vocabulary of a considerable number of words in that language.[9] He walked with me down to the boats, where we found several squaws assembled, as Dr. Murray assured me, for the same purpose as females of a certain class in the maritime towns of Europe crowd round vessels lately arrived from a long voyage, and it must be admitted with the same success. Towards evening an old chief came down, and harangued the Indians assembled about the boats, for the purpose of inviting the warriors of the late expedition to a feast prepared for them in the village. I was told it was intended that the dance of the scalp should be performed, on the [45] occasion of the war party having brought in seven scalps from the Ayauwais, a village belonging to whom they had destroyed, and killed two old men and five women and children. All the rest had fled at their approach; but as rain came on the dance was not performed. At evening Dr. Murray proposed that we should walk into the village, which I found to consist of about one hundred lodges of an oblong form, the frame of timber, and the covering mats, made of the leaves of flag, or *typha palustris*. On our return through the town, we called at the lodge belonging to a chief named Waubuschon, with whom Dr. Murray was particularly acquainted. The floor was covered with mats, on which they sat; but as I was a stranger, I was offered a cushion. A wooden bowl was now handed round, containing square pieces of cake, in taste resembling gingerbread. On inquiry I found it was made of the pulp of the persimon, (*diospyros Virginiana*) mixed with pounded corn. This bread they called staninca. Shortly afterwards some young squaws came in, with whom the doctor (who understood the Osage language) began to joke, and in a few minutes they seemed to have overcome all bashfulness, or even modesty. Some of their expressions, as interpreted to me, were of the most obscene nature. The squaw of our host laughed heartily, and did all in her power to promote this kind of conversation. I expressed [46] my surprise to Dr. Murray, but was informed by him that similar conduct would have been pursued at any other lodge in the village. We left the lodge of Waubuschon, and went to that of the chief. On the roof the seven scalps were placed, tied to sticks ornamented with racoons' tails. We were shewn to the upper end of the lodge, and sat down on the ground. I learned that the chief was not present; that he was t boy of six years of age, his name Young White Hair, and that the tribe was now governed by a regent. Immediately a warrior came in, and made a speech, frequently pointing to the scalps on the roof, as they were visible through the hole by which the smoke escaped. I understood that he had distinguished himself in the late expedition against the Ayauways. After shaking hands with all round, we left the lodge, and in our return to the boat we met the squaw belonging to our interpreter, who being of the Ayauway nation, appeared to be much afraid of the Osages during our passage up the river, and it was thought with reason, as on our first interview with the commandant, it had been debated whether or not it would be prudent to send a file of men to conduct her from the boat to the fort during our stay. On inquiry we found that she had
been invited up to the village by some of the Osages, and of course, according to Indian custom, would be as safe with them as in the fort.

[47] I inquired of Dr. Murray concerning a practice which I had heard prevailed among the Osages, of rising before day to lament their dead. He informed me that such was really the custom, and that the loss of a horse or a dog was as powerful a stimulus to their lamentations as that of a relative or friend; and he assured me, that if I should be awake before day the following morning, I might certainly hear them.

Accordingly on the 9th I heard before day that the howling had commenced; and the

better to escape observation, I wrapped a blanket round me, tied a black handkerchief on my head, and fastened on my belt, in which I stuck my tomahawk, and then walked into the village. The doors of the lodges were closed, but in the greater part of them the women were crying and howling in a tone that seemed to indicate excessive grief. On the outside of the village I heard the men, who, Dr. Murray had informed me, always go out of the lodges to lament. I soon came within twenty paces of one, and could see him distinctly, as it was moonlight: he also saw me, and ceased, upon which I withdrew. I was more successful with another, whom I approached nearer unobserved. He rested his back against the stump of a tree, and continued for about twenty seconds to cry out in a loud and high tone of voice, when he suddenly lowered to a low muttering, mixed with sobs: in a few seconds he again raised to the [48] former pitch.[10] We breakfasted with the commandant, and afterwards walked out to view some improvements he had made in the fort. In our walk we observed what, on the first view, appeared to be two squaws carrying a tub of water, suspended on a pole. Mr. Crooks desired me to notice them, which I did, and remarked that one of them had more the appearance of a man than of a woman. He assured me that it was a man, and that there were several others in the village, who, like the one we saw, were condemned for life to associate with the squaws, to wear the same dress, and do the same drudgery. I now learned, that when the Osages go to war, they keep a watchful eye over the young men who are then making their first essay in arms, and such as appear to possess the necessary qualifications are admitted to the rank of warriors, or, according to their own idiom, *brave men*. But if any exhibit evident proofs of cowardice, on the return of the party they are compelled to assume the dress and character of women, and their doom is fixed for life, as no opportunity is afterwards afforded them to retrieve [49] their character.[11] The men do not associate with them, nor are they suffered to marry, or have any intercourse with the women: they maybe treated with the greatest indignity by any warrior, as they are not suffered to resent it. I found, on inquiry, that the late war party had not been conducted by any of the principal chiefs, a circumstance which often happens, as any of the noted warriors may lead a party, provided he can obtain adherents, and he finds no difficulty in procuring the sanction of the chiefs; but in this case he must travel without mockasons, or even leggings. He goes the foremost of the party, makes the fire at night, and stands to keep watch whilst the party lie down to sleep, nor can he lie down unless a warrior rises [50] and takes his place. This indulgence he must not require, but may accept, if voluntarily offered. In pursuing the object of the expedition, his commands are absolute, and he is obeyed without a murmur. The Osages are so tall and robust as almost to warrant the application of the term gigantic: few of them appear to be under six feet, and many are above it. Their shoulders and visages are broad, which tend to strengthen the idea of their being giants. On our return from viewing the improvements in the fort, I was introduced to Mr. Sibly, the Indian agent there, who is the son of Dr. Sibly of Natchitoches." He informed me that he purposed shortly to attend the Petits Osages in their annual journey for salt, and invited me to accompany him,
offering as an inducement, to procure two horses from the Indians for my own use. Learning that the place where the salt is procured is that which has occasioned the report of a salt mountain existing in Upper Louisiana, I was very much inclined to accept his invitation; but finding Mr. Hunt unwilling to release me from my promise to attend him, I declined it. I accompanied Mr. Sibly and Dr. Murray in the evening, to see the dance of the scalp. The ceremony consisted in carrying the scalps elevated on sticks through the village, followed by the warriors who had composed the war party, dressed in all their ornaments, and painted as for war.

[51] On the 10th we again embarked on the river, although it rained very hard. Our number was now augmented to twenty-six by the addition of Mr. Crooks and his party. We had not proceeded more than two miles, when our interpreter, Dorion, beat his squaw severely; and on Mr. Hunt inquiring the cause, he told him that she had taken a fancy to remain at the Osages in preference to proceeding with us, and because he had opposed it, she had continued sulky ever since. We were obliged to encamp early this day, as the rain became excessive.

11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th.-We had a fair wind, and employed our sail, wherefore I could not go ashore without danger of being left behind. During these days the bread was examined, and being found wholly unfit for use, it was thrown overboard.

15th.-We passed the scite of a village which formerly belonged to the Kansas Indians- I had an opportunity of going ashore, and found the soil to have the appearance of the greatest fertility. On the sides of the hills I noticed abundance of the hop plant (*humulus lupulus*.)

16th.- We began to notice more particularly the great number of drowned buffaloes that were floating on the river; vast numbers of them were also [52] thrown ashore, and upon the rafts, on the points of the islands. The carcases had attracted an immense number of turkey buzzards, (*vultur aura*) and as the preceding night had been rainy, multitudes of them were sitting on the trees, with their backs towards the sun, and their wings spread out to dry, a common practice with these birds after rain.

17th.- Arrived at the wintering houses, near the Naduet River, and joined the rest of the party.

18th.- I proceeded to examine the neighbouring country, and soon discovered that pigeons (columba migratoria) were in the woods. I returned , and exchanged my rifle for a fowling-piece, and in a few hours shot two hundred and seventy-one, when I desisted. I had an opportunity this day of observing the manner in which they feed: it affords a most singular spectacle, and is also an example of the rigid discipline maintained by gregarious animals. This species of pigeon associates in prodigious flocks: one of these flocks, when on the ground, will cover an area of several acres in extent, and the birds are so close to each other that the ground can scarcely be seen. This phalanx moves through the woods with considerable celerity, picking up, as it passes along, every thing that will serve for food. It is evident that the foremost [53] ranks must be the most successful, and nothing will remain for the hindermost. But that all may have an equal chance, the instant that any rank becomes the last, it rises, and flying over the whole flock, alights exactly ahead of the foremost. They succeed each other with so much rapidity, that there is a continued stream of them in the air; and a side view of them exhibits the appearance of the segment of a large circle, moving through the woods. I observed that they cease to look for food a considerable time before they become the last rank, but strictly adhere to their regulations, and never rise until there is none behind them.

19th.- On the bluffs[12] under which the wintering [54] house was placed, there is a considerable number of flat stones. On examining one, I found beneath it several snakes, in a half torpid state, arising probably from the cold state of the weather, and I found on further examination, that the number of snakes under these stones was astonishing. I selected this day eleven species, and killed a great number.

20th.- It was this day arranged, by the desire of Mr. Donald M'Kenzie, that I should travel in his boat, and preparations were made for our departure the succeeding morning. I was employed in continuing my researches, and had a narrow escape from a rattlesnake; it darted at me from the top of a small rock, at the base of which I was gathering plants. The noise of its rattle just gave me sufficient notice to withdraw my head.

21St.- We again embarked in four boats. Our party amounted to nearly sixty persons: forty were Canadian boatmen, such as are employed by the North West Company, and are termed in Canada *Engages or Voyageurs*. Our boats were all furnished with masts and sails, and as the wind blew pretty strong from the south-east, we availed ourselves of it during the greater part of the day.

22d, 23d, 24th.- The wind continuing favourable, [55] we sailed almost the whole of these three days, and made considerable progress.

25th.- Went ashore with the hunters, and collected a new species of rattle-snake, and a bird of the genus recurvirostra. The hunters killed two elks, but they were so lean that we left them for the vultures: at all times their flesh is much inferior to that of deer.

26th.- The wind had changed to the north-west, and blew so strong, that we were obliged to stop during the whole day. When I found this measure determined on, I resolved to avail myself of the opportunity to quit the valley of the Missouri, and examine the surrounding country. After travelling about three miles, I ascended the bluffs, and found that the face of the country, soil, &c. were entirely changed. As far as the eye could reach, not a single tree or shrub was visible. The whole of the stratum immediately below the vegetable mould, is a vast bed of exceedingly hard yellow clay. In the valleys, the land floods, during the rainy season, have worn channels so deep, and with the sides so precipitous, that a traveller is often under the necessity of proceeding a mile or two along one of these ravines before he can cross it. In the bottoms of several I observed evident indications of coal.

[56] 27th.- The night had been very cold, and before we had been long on the river, the sides of the boats and the oars were covered with ice, although we were not farther north than 40 deg. After breakfast, I went out with the hunters, and found my hopes of a change in the vegetation realized. The bluffs forming the bounds of the river are no longer in part rocks, but a continued chain of rounded knobs of stiff clay: under these is a fine bed of bituminous coal, rendered visible wherever the river has washed away the base. This day I collected several new species of plants.

28th.- We breakfasted on one of the islands formed by La Platte Riviere, the largest river that falls into the Missouri. It empties itself into three channels, except in the time of its annual flood, when the intervening land is overflowed; it is then about a mile in breadth. We noticed this day the skeleton or frame of a skin canoe, in which the river had been crossed by Indians: we saw also other indications of war parties having been recently in the neighbourhood, and observed in the night the reflection of immense fires, occasioned by burning the prairies. At this late season,the fires are not made by the hunters to facilitate their hunting, but by war parties; and more particularly when returning unsuccessful, or after a defeat, to prevent their enemies from tracing their [57] steps. As the ash discontinues to grow on the Missouri above this place, it was thought expedient to lay in a stock of oars and poles; and for that purpose, we stopped in the forenoon, about a league above the mouth of Papillon Creek, and I availed myself of this opportunity to visit the bluffs four or five miles distant from us, on the north-east side. On approaching them I found an extensive lake running along their base, across which I waded, the water in no part reaching higher than my breast. This lake had evidently been in former times the course of the river: its surface was much covered with aquatic plants, amongst which were *nelumbium luteum* and *hydropeltis purpurea*: on the broad leaves of the former a great number of water snakes were basking, which on my approach darted into the water. On gaining the summit of the bluffs, I was amply repaid by the grandeur of the scene that suddenly opened to my view, and also by the acquisition of a number of new plants. On looking into the valley of the Missouri from an elevation of about two hundred and fifty feet, the view was magnificent: the bluffs can be seen for more than thirty miles, stretching to the north-eastward in a right line, their summits varied by an infinity of undulations. The flat valley of the river, about six or seven miles in breadth, is partly prairie, but interspersed with clumps of the finest trees, through the intervals of which could be seen [58] the majestic but muddy Missouri. The scene towards the interior of the country was extremely singular: it presents to the view a countless number of little green hills, apparently sixty or eighty feet in perpendicular height, and so steep, that it was with much difficulty I could ascend them; some were so acutely pointed, that two people would have found it difficult to stand on the top at the same time. I wandered among these mountains in miniature until late in the afternoon, when I recrossed the lake, and arrived at the boats soon after sun-set.

29th.- Being informed that the oars and poles would not be finished before noon, Mr.

M'Kenzie obliged me by sending his boat to carry me across the river. I found the bluffs to be of a nature similar to those on the north-east side. I met the boats in the afternoon, and we encamped about fourteen miles below the wintering house belonging to Mr. Crooks, who proposed to me that we should walk to it the following morning, along the bluffs; as the distance was much less by that route than by the course of the river .

30th.- I set out with Mr. Crooks at sunrise, for the wintering house, and travelled nearly a mile on a low piece of ground, covered with long grass: at its termination we ascended a small elevation, [59] and entered on a plain of about eight miles in length, and from two and a half to three miles in breadth. As the old grass had been burned in the autumn, it was now covered with the most beautiful verdure, intermixed with flowers. It was also adorned with clumps of trees, sufficient for ornament, but too few to intercept the sight: in the intervals we counted nine flocks of elk and deer feeding, some of which we attempted to approach near enough to fire at, but without success. On arriving at the termination of the plain, our route lay along a series of the most rugged clay bluffs: some of them were in part washed away by the river, and exhibited perpendicular faces at least a hundred feet in height. At noon we arrived at the wintering house, and dined on dried buffaloe. In the evening the boats came up.

May 1st.- This day was employed in embarking some articles necessary for the voyage, together with Indian goods, and in the evening Mr. Crooks informed me that he intended to set out the next morning on foot, for the Ottoes, a nation of Indians on the Platte River, who owed him some beaver- From the Ottoes he purposed travelling to the Maha nation, about two hundred miles above us on the Missouri, where he should again meet the boats. I immediately offered to accompany him; he seemed much pleased, and we proceeded to cast [60] bullets, and make other arrangements necessary for our journey.

2d.- At day-break we were preparing to depart, as also were the rest of the party, when an occurrence took place that delayed us until sunrise, and created a considerable degree of confusion. Amongst our hunters were two brothers of the name of Harrington, one of whom, Samuel Harrington, had been hunting on the Missouri for two years, and had joined the party in autumn: the other, William Harrington, had engaged at St. Louis, in the following March, and accompanied us from thence. The latter now avowed that he had engaged at the command of his mother, for the purpose of bringing back his brother, and they both declared their intention of abandoning the party immediately. As it had already been intimated to us at the Osage nation, that the Nodowessie, or Sioux Indians, intended to oppose our progress up the river, and as no great dependence was placed on our Canadians in case of an attack, the loss of two good riflemen was a matter of regret to us all. Mr. Hunt, although a gentleman of the mildest disposition, was extremely exasperated; and when it was found that all arguments and entreaties were unavailing, they were left, as it was then imagined, without a single bullet or a load of powder, four hundred [61] miles at least from any white man's house, and six hundred and fifty from the mouth of the river. As soon as the final issue of this affair was known, Mr. Crooks and myself set out for the Otto village, attended by, two of the Canadians, one named Guardépée, the other La Liberté. Our equipments were, a blanket, a rifle, eighty bullets, a full powder horn a knife, and tomahawk, for each. Besides these, I had a large inflexible portfolio, containing several quires of paper, for the purpose of laying down specimens of plants; we had also a small camp-kettle, and a little jerked buffaloe meat. In half an hour we left the valley of the Missouri, and entered on the vast plain. We took our course S. S. E. which we held for some hours, and travelled at a great rate, hoping to reach the Platte that night, although estimated at forty-five miles from the place of our departure. A little before noon we saw four large animals at a great distance, which we supposed to be elk, but on crossing their footsteps some time afterwards, we found to our great satisfaction that they were buffaloe. In the afternoon we crossed two branches of Papillon Creek, and an hour before gun-set arrived at the Come du Cerf River, a deep clear stream, about eighty yards in breadth: it falls into the Platte about twenty miles below. As our Canadians could not swim, it was necessary to construct a raft, and we concluded to remain here for the [62] night.

This arrangement was very agreeable to me, as I was much exhausted, which Mr. Crooks considered was, in a great measure, owing to my having drank water too copiously during the day. Although we had not eaten any thing from the time of our departure, I was unable to eat at supper, and lay down immediately.

3d.- We arose at day break. I found myself completely refreshed. Our raft being ready at sun-rise, we crossed the river, and in two hours arrived at the Platte, exactly opposite the Otto village. The river is here About eight hundred yards in breadth, but appears to be shallow, as its name indicates. The southern bank is wholly divested of timber, and as the village is situated on a declivity near the river, we could see the lodges very distinctly, but there was no appearance of Indians. We discharged our rifles, but the signal was not answered from the village: in about five minutes we heard the report of a gun down the river, and immediately proceeded towards the place. At the distance of half a mile, we arrived opposite to an island, on the point of which a white man was standing, who informed us that we could cross over to him by wading: we did not stop to take off our clothes, but went over immediately, the water reaching to our arm-pits. This man proved to be an American, of the name of Rogers, and [63] was employed as an interpreter by a Frenchman from St. Louis, who was also on the island with a few goods. They informed us that they had been concealed for some days on the island, having discovered a war party hovering round, belonging, as they supposed, to the Loup, or Wolf nation, who had come in order to surprise the Ottoes. They had nothing to give us as food, excepting some beaver flesh, which Rogers obtained by trapping on Come du Cerf, or Elk Horn River; as it was stale, and tasted fishy, I did not much relish it, but there was no alternative but to eat it or starve. We remained all day concealed on the island.

On the morning of the 4th, before daylight, Rogers set out to look at his traps, on Elk Horn River, distant to the eastward not more than five miles. I accompanied him, and on crossing the channel of the Platte, found that in the same place where the day before it reached to our arm-pits, it did not now reach to our waists, although the river had not fallen. Such changes in the bottom of this river, Rogers told me were very frequent, as it is composed of a moving gravel, in which our feet sank to a considerable depth. We arrived at the Elk Horn River about sun-rise, but found no beaver in the traps. After our return to the island, I expressed a wish to visit the Otto village, which was in sight; and Rogers, who had a canoe concealed in the willows that surrounded the island, [64] landed me on the other side of the river. I found the village to consist of about fifty-four lodges, of a circular form, and about forty feet in diameter, with a projecting part at the entrance, of ten or twelve feet in length, in the form of a porch. At almost every lodge, the door or entrance was closed after the manner which is customary with Indians when they go on hunting parties, and take their squaws and children with them. It consists in putting a few sticks across, in a particular manner, which they so exactly note and remember, as to be able to discover the least change in their position. Although anxious to examine the internal structure of the lodges, I did not violate the injunction conveyed by this slight obstruction, and after searching some time, found a few that were left entirely open. On entering one, I found the length of the porch to be an inclined plane to the level of the floor, about two and a half or three feet below the surface of the ground: round the area of the lodge are placed from fifteen to eighteen posts, forked at the top, and about seven feet high from the floor. In the centre, a circular space of about eight feet in diameter is dug to the depth of two feet; four strong posts are placed in the form of a square, about twelve feet asunder, and at equal distances from this space: these posts are about twenty feet high, and cross pieces are laid on the tops. The rafters are laid from the forked [65] tops of the outside posts over these cross pieces, and reach nearly to the centre, where a small hole is left for the smoke to escape: across the rafters small pieces of timber are laid; over these, sticks and a covering of sods, and lastly earth. The fire is made in the middle of the central space, round the edges of which they sit, and the beds are fixed betwixt the outer posts. The door is placed at the immediate entrance into the lodge: it is made of a buffalo skin, stretched in a frame of wood, and is suspended from the top. On entering, it swings forward, and when let go, it falls to its former position. On my return to the island, Mr. Crooks informed me that he had resolved to send Rogers to find the Ottoes, who were hunting about twenty miles from us, in order to collect his debts, or to procure horses for us, to facilitate our journey to the Maha nation.

5th.-In the morning early, Rogers set out on his expedition, and returned.

On the 6th, without having obtained any beaver or horses, excepting one horse belonging to Mr. Crooks. This night I procured from Rogers what information I could relative to the Otto nation, and was informed that the Missouris are incorporated with them; that they are their descendants, and speak the same language. They call themselves Wad-doké-tah-tah, and can muster one hundred and thirty [66] or one hundred and forty warriors. They are now at war with the Loups or Wolf Indians, the Osages, and the Sioux. He said they furnish a considerable quantity of bear, deer, and beaver skins, and are very well disposed towards their traders, who may safely credit them. They do not claim the property of the land on which they live, nor any other tract. A very considerable part of the surrounding country formerly belonged to the Missouris, who were once the most powerful nation on the Missouri river, but have been reduced by war and the small pox to be dependent on the Ottoes, by whom they are treated as inferiors. Rogers had with him a squaw of the Maha nation, with her child, whom he wished to send with us to her father. To this Mr. Crooks consented, and early.

On the morning of the 7th we set out, putting the squaw and her child on the horse. Having crossed over from the island, we steered a due north course, and came to the Elk Horn River, after travelling about ten miles. Mr. Crooks immediately stripped, to examine if the river was fordable, and found that, excepting about twenty yards in the middle, we might wade it. I offered to carry the child, but the squaw refused, and after stripping herself, she gave me her clothes, put the child on her neck, and swam over, the little creature sticking to her hair. After assisting our Canadians across, we continued along [67] the bank, in expectation of arriving at the creek, distant about five miles, which comes in a direction from the north. We observed, that as our distance from the island increased, the reluctance of the squaw to proceed also increased, and soon after we had crossed the river, she began to cry, and declared she would go no farther. Mr. Crooks, who understood the language, remonstrated with her; but finding it in vain, he ordered Guardépée to take her back, and we encamped to wait his return.

8th.- About two o'clock in the morning Guardépée returned with the horse, and at day-light we set out. In about an hour we came to the creek, and continued along its banks, and found ourselves in a short time on a most beautiful prairie, along which the creek flowed, without having a single tree on its border, or even a shrub, excepting a few widely scattered plum bushes. We shot this day two prairie hens, (*tetrao umbellus*) on which we supped, having dined on some jerked buffalo, brought by Rogers from the Ottoes. We slept on the border of the creek, but not so comfortably as usual, as the dew was so copious, that before morning our blankets were wet through.

9th.- We continued to pursue our course along the creek, but with great trouble, as our mockassons, [68] being of untanned skins, became so soft as to render it difficult to keep them on our feet. We shot a prairie hen, and prepared to breakfast, having first relieved the horse from the baggage, and turned him out to graze. Whilst we were collecting some dry stalks of plants to boil our kettle, a herd of elk, nineteen in number, appeared marching towards the creek, and Guardépée immediately ran to put himself in such a position that he might fire at them, when the horse took fright, broke his tie, and gallopped off. Guardépée fired, but only wounded one so slightly that it ran off with the rest, and escaped. The horse took the direct route back towards the Ottoes, and was followed by Mr. Crooks and Guardépée ; but in vain: they gave up the chase, finding it impossible to recover him. After we had breakfasted, we threw the saddle and every thing belonging to the horse into the creek; each man took his share of the baggage, and we again set out, and travelled without stopping until evening, when we arrived at the head of the creek, and came to what is called a dividing ridge[13]. We passed over it, and came to the head of a creek, running in a N. E. direction. This we supposed to be Blackbird Creek, which falls into the Missouri, near the monument of a famous chief of the [69] Mahas, named Blackbird. At the distance of about two miles, we saw a small clump of trees on the border of the creek, and resolved to remain there during the night, hoping to find fuel to boil a small portion of jerked buffalo, being all we had left. Whilst the supper was preparing, I walked back to an eminence, to collect some interesting plants, having noticed them in passing. I had not been long employed in that way, when I saw a distant flash of lightning in the south, and soon after others in quick succession. As these and other appearances indicated the approach of a violent storm, I hastened back to recommend precautions for the security of our arms and ammunition. Having boiled our meat, which amounted to a few morsels each, we secured our powder horns and some tow in our camp kettle, which we inverted, and discharged our rifles. Excepting the sound of distant thunder, which was continual, an awful silence prevailed, and the cloud which had already spread over one half of the visible horizon, was fast shutting out the little remains of daylight. As the trees afforded us no fuel, and in a few minutes would become no shelter, but might endanger our safety, I recommended that we should go to the open prairie, which we did, and lay down in our blankets: I put my plants under me. For several hours the thunder, lightning, and rain were incessant, and such rain as I have seldom witnessed. [70] In half an hour after the storm commenced, we had nothing more to fear from it, excepting the cold occasioned by the torrents that fell on us. At the approach of morning the rain ceased: we saw a few stars, and with joy noticed the first appearances of day. We arose, and wrung the water out of our blankets, and finding ourselves very much benumbed, we walked about to restore the circulation: when it was sufficiently light, we put our rifles in order, which was attended with considerable difficulty, as our hands were almost without sensation. Having arranged our arms, we set out, but were extremely uncomfortable, as our clothes, being made of dressed skins, stuck so close to our bodies as to make our march very unpleasant. We proceeded at a brisk pace to warm ourselves, and in about two hours came to a small ridge, which we ascended, and when near the top, Guardépée preceded us, to examine if any game was in sight. He gave the signal for us to remain quiet and soon afterwards fired at two buffalo cows, with their calves. One of the cows he wounded, and they ran off with so much speed, that the calves could not keep up with them. Perceiving this, I immediately pursued the calves, one of which I killed. The rest of the party followed the cows for a short distance, but finding the inutility of it, they soon returned: and notwithstanding my remonstrances, Guardépée killed the other calf. As we had eaten [71] but little the day before, we were very glad of this supply, and taking what we thought proper, proceeded on our journey. We soon began to perceive that the face of the country was changing in its appearance. From the Elk Horn River, our course had hitherto been over a most beautiful prairie, with scarcely a tree or shrub, but covered with grass and flowers: we now began to observe a more broken country to the eastward, and some scattered bushes in the valleys. From an eminence, we soon after perceived a hill, that had a heap of stones on the summit: Mr. Crooks assured me that this was the monument of Blackbird[14], the famous [72] Maha chief, and that it was one of the bluffs of the Missouri: we judged it was about fifteen miles N. E. of us. Satisfied that we were now near the boats, and having arrived at some small

timber, where we could procure fuel, we dined on our veal; and although without bread or salt it was to us a luxury, as we had long been unaccustomed to those articles. We halted about three hours before sunset, at about five miles from the monument of Blackbird, to which place Mr. Crooks despatched Guardépée to look for a letter, as Mr. Hunt had promised to leave one there on passing [73] the place. At night he returned, but without a letter, and we concluded that the boats had not yet arrived.

11 th.- We set off early, and soon fell in with the trace from the Maha village to the monument : along this we travelled, and about ten o'clock arrived at the town, where we met one of the Canadians belonging to the boats. He informed us that they arrived the day before, and were stationed about four miles from the village. As we were in want of food, we did not stop, but proceeded to the boats, where we found a considerable number of Indians assembled to trade. They gave jerked buffalo meat, tallow, corn, and marrow; and in return they received tobacco in carottes, vermillion, blue beads, &c. There, also, we found Mr. James Aird, an old and respectable trader, with whom I had become acquainted at St. Louis. He informed me that he should go to the United States in a few days; I therefore availed myself of this opportunity to forward letters, and was employed in writing until the 12th at noon. Immediately after, I set out on an excursion to the bluffs, and in my way passed through the village, where the great number of children playing about the lodges, entirely naked, drew my attention. I soon attracted their notice also, and they began to collect around me. Some of the [74] boldest ventured to touch my hand, after which they ran back a few paces, but soon again resumed their courage. When about fifty or sixty had assembled, I came to where three young squaws were repairing one of the stages erected for the purpose of exposing the buffalo skins to dry, whilst they are in preparation. The squaws, seeing the children run after me, spoke to them in a commanding tone, when they instantly stopped, and not one followed me afterwards. I doubt much if such a crowd of children, in any European city, would have obeyed with such promptness, had such a phenomenon appeared among them, as they must have considered me. On arriving at the summit of the bluffs, I had a fine view of the town below. It had a singular appearance. The frame work of the lodges consists of ten or twelve long poles, placed in the periphery of a circle of about sixteen feet in diameter, and are inclined towards each other, so as to cross at a little more than half their length from the bottom; and the tops diverging with the same angle, exhibit the appearance of one cone inverted on the apex of another. The lower cone is covered with dressed buffalo skins, sewed together, and fancifully painted; some with an undulating red or yellow band, of ten or twelve inches in breadth, surrounding the lodge at half its height; in others, rude figures of horses, buffaloe or deer were painted; others again with attempts [75] at the human face, in a circle, as the moon is sometimes painted; these were not less than four feet in diameter. I judged there were not fewer than eighty lodges. I did not remain long on the summit of the bluffs, as I perceived, from the heaps of earth, some of these recent, that it was the burial ground, and I knew the veneration they have for the graves of their ancestors. I proceeded along the bluffs, and was very successful in my researches, but had not been long employed, when I saw an old Indian galloping towards me. He came up and shook hands with me, and pointing to the plants I had collected, said, "*Bon pour manger*?" to which I replied, "*Ne pas bon*." He then said, "*Bon pour medicine*?" I replied "*Oui*." He again shook hands and rode away, leaving me somewhat surprised at being addressed in French by an Indian. On my return through the village, I was stopped by a group of squaws, who invited me *very kindly* into their lodges, calling me wakendaga, or as it is pronounced, wa-ken-da-ga (physician.) I declined accepting their invitation, showing them that the sun was near setting, and that it would be night before I could reach the boats. They then invited me to stay all night: this also I declined, but suffered them to examine my plants, for all of which I found they had names.

On my way to the boats, I met a number of Indians returning to the village, all of whom shook [76] hands with me. Two of them informed me that they had seen me at St. Louis, and at the same time gave me satisfactory proofs of it[15]. I did not reach the boats until it was dark.

13th.- In the forenoon of this day, Mr. Hunt was waited upon by two chiefs, who were

contending for the sanction of the government of the United States, to determine their claim to kingly power. Mr. Hunt declined interfering, not being vested with the powers to act. The names of these two chiefs were the Big Elk and the White Cow, the former of whom ultimately succeeded, and has since signalized himself by a fine specimen of Indian eloquence, at the funeral of a Sioux chief, in the [77] Missouri territory[16]. The Mahas seem very friendly to the whites, and cultivate corn, beans, melons, squashes, and a small species of tobacco (*nicotiana rustica*.) In 1802 they were visited by the small-pox, which made dreadful havoc, and destroyed at least two thirds of the whole nation. At present they muster nearly two hundred warriors, and from the great number of children, I judge that they are again increasing. In stature they are much inferior to the Osages, although I noticed several whom I thought would reach to six feet. Their hunting ground is from their village to *L'Eau qui Court*, and along that river.

14th.- This day three Sioux Indians arrived, of the Yanktoon Alma tribe, who reported that several nations of the Sioux were assembling higher up the river, with an intention to oppose our progress. This news was concealed as much as possible from the voyageurs, and we prepared for our departure on the following morning.

15th.- We embarked early, and passed Floyd's Bluffs, so named from a person of the name of Floyd (one of Messrs. Lewis and Clarke's party) having been buried there. In the course of this day, I was informed by Mr. M'Kenzie, that in the night of the [78] 7th instant, during our journey to the Ottoes, eleven Sioux Indians, who *had given or devoted their clothes to the medicine*[17], ran into the camp with their tomahawks in their hands, and were instantly surrounded and taken prisoners. The leader, finding the party on their guard, and much stronger probably than he expected, immediately cried out to his followers in their language, " My children, do not hurt the white people." As the party were fully apprized of the murderous intentions of these miscreants, the general voice was for putting them to death; but Mr. Hunt would not consent to it, and ordered that they should be conveyed over the river in one of the boats, at the same time informing them, that if they were again caught by the party, every man should be sacrificed. From a coincidence of time and circumstances, it appeared almost certain that it was this party that had crossed the Missouri, near the mouth of the river Platte, in the canoe of which we saw the skeleton on the 28th of April; and that it was also this party that was discovered by Rogers [79] hovering about the Otto village, as the Sioux are at war with the Ottoes: it therefore appeared that Mr. Crooks and myself had run a greater risk than we were sensible of at the time.

16th, 17th, and 18th.- We had a fair wind, and made considerable progress up the river; few opportunities were therefore afforded for walking. I regretted this circumstance, as the bluffs had a very interesting appearance. During a short excursion, I was enabled to ascertain that the lower part of the bluffs was impregnated with sulphur, mixed with sulphate of iron and selenite crystals.

19th.- About nine o'clock we observed three buffalo cows and a calf swimming across the river. Two of them and the calf were killed; but we found them to be so poor that we only preserved the calf.

20th.- We were stopped all day by a strong head wind. I availed myself of this circumstance, and was very successful in my researches. We found that the river was rising rapidly; it rose during this day more than three feet: we therefore concluded that this was the commencement of the annual flood of the Missouri, occasioned by the melting of the snow on the Rocky Mountains.

[80] 21st.-The river continued to rise, and the current to increase in rapidity: the navigation was therefore rendered very difficult. I walked the greatest part of the day, chiefly on the bluffs, and found the summits for the most part covered with gravel, containing tumblers of feldspar, granite, and some porphyry.

22d.- In the morning our hunters killed three buffaloe and two elks on an island; and as we were now arriving at the country of our enemies, the Sioux, it was determined that they should in a great measure confine themselves to the islands, in their search for game. We dined at the commencement of a beautiful prairie; afterwards I went to the bluffs, and proceeded along them till near evening. On regaining the bank of the river, I walked down to meet the boats, but did not find them until a considerable time after it was dark, as they had stopped early in the afternoon, having met with a canoe, in which were two hunters of the names of Jones and Carson, who had been two years near the head of the Missouri. These men agreed to join the party, and were considered as a valuable acquisition; any accession of strength being now desirable. This day, for the first time, I was much annoyed by the abundance of the prickly pear. Against the thorns of this plant I found that [81] mockasons are but a slight defence. I observed two species, *cactus opuntia* and *mamillaris*.

23d.- When on the bluffs yesterday, I observed in the river an extensive bend, and determined to travel across the neck. I therefore did not embark with the boats, but filled my shot pouch with parched corn, and set out, but not without being reminded by Mr. Hunt that we were now in an enemy's country. In about two hours I had entirely passed the range of hills forming the boundary of the Missouri; and as I had before experienced, I found the soil and face of the country to improve very much as we proceed from the river. The hills here are only gentle swellings, and, together with the intervening valleys, were covered with the most beautiful verdure. At a small distance from my route I noticed a space, of several acres in extent, of a more vivid green than the surrounding prairie, and on my nearer approach it had the appearance of a rabbit burrow. From the previous descriptions given by the hunters, I immediately conceived it to be, what it proved, a colony of the prairie dog[18]. The little animals had taken the alarm before I reached their settlement, and were sitting singly on the small hillocks of earth at the [82] mouth of their holes. They were very clamorous uttering a cry which had some resemblance to a shrill barking. I fired at several, but at the instant of the flash, they darted with surprising quickness into their holes, before the shot could reach them. I soon found the impossibility of procuring one with shot only, as unless they are instantaneously killed, they are certain to get into their holes, from the edges of which they never wander if a man is in sight. I continued to travel through this charming country till near the middle of the afternoon, when I again came to the bluffs of the Missouri, where, amongst a number of new plants, I found a fine species of ribes, or currant. As it was now time to look for the boats, I went to the river and proceeded down the bank, in the expectation of meeting them. I had probably travelled about two miles, when suddenly I felt a hand laid upon my shoulder, and turning round, saw a naked Indian with his bow bent, and the arrow pointed towards me. As I had no expectation of meeting any Indians excepting the Sioux, and as with them the idea of danger was associated, I took my gun from my shoulder, and by a kind of spontaneous movement put my hand towards the lock, when I perceived that the Indian drew his bow still farther. I now found myself completely in his power; but recollecting that if an enemy, he would have shot me before I saw him, I held out my hand, which he [83] took, and afterwards laid his hand on my breast, and in the Osage language said "*Moi-he ton-ga de-ah*," literally in English, "Big Knife you ?"[19] which I luckily understood and answered, "*Hoya*," (Yes) and laying my hand on his breast, said, "*Nodo-wessie de-ah*," (Sioux you.) He replied, "*Honkoska ponca we ah*.." (No, Poncar me.) He then pointed up the river, and I saw two other Indians running towards us, and not more than fifty yards distant. They soon came up, and all the three laid hold of me, pointing over the bluffs, and making signs that I should go with them. I resisted and pushed off their hands. As the river had overflowed where we stood, I pointed to a sand-hill a Small distance from us, to which we went and sat down. I amused them with my pocket compass for some time, when they again seized me, and I still resisted, and took out a small microscope. This amused them for some time longer, when on a sudden one of them leaped up and gave the war whoop. I laid hold of my gun, with an intention to defend myself, but was instantly relieved from apprehension by his pointing down the river, and I perceived the mast of one of the boats appear over the willows. The Indians seemed very much inclined to run away, but I invited

them to accompany me to [84] the boats, and shewed them by signs that I would give them something to drink, which they complied with, but soon after disappeared. We travelled very late this evening, and encamped above the mouth of a small creek. It appeared that the three Indians went to inform their nation, as in the morning a number of them came to our camp and also a white man, with a letter to Mr. Hunt from Mr. Lisa, one of the Missouri Fur Company, for whom he was agent. Mr. Lisa had arrived at the Mahas some days after we left, and had dispatched this man by land. It appeared he had been apprised of the hostile intentions of the Sioux, and the purport of the letter was to prevail on Mr. Hunt to wait for him, that they might, for mutual safety, travel together on that part of the river which those blood thirsty savages frequent. It was judged expedient to trade with the Indians for some jerked buffalo meat, and more than 1000 lbs. was obtained for as much tobacco as cost two dollars. About noon we set out, and at the distance of a league passed the mouth of the river called L'Eau qui Court, or Rapid River.

25th.- It was discovered early this morning, that two men who had engaged at the Mahas, and had received equipments to a considerable value, had deserted in the night. As it was known that one of them could not swim, and we had passed a [85] large creek about a league below, our party went in pursuit of them, but without success.

26th.- Whilst at breakfast on a beautiful part of the river, we observed two canoes descending on the opposite side. In one, by the help of our glasses, we ascertained there were two white men, and in the other only one. A gun was discharged, when they discovered us, and crossed over. We found them to be three men belonging to Kentucky, whose names were Robinson, Hauberk, and Reesoner. They had been several years hunting on and beyond the Rocky Mountains, until they *imagined* they were tired of the hunting life; and having families and good plantations in Kentucky, were returning to them; but on seeing us, families, plantations, and all vanished; they agreed to join us, and turned their canoes adrift. We were glad of this addition to our number, as the Poncars had confirmed all that we had heard respecting the hostile disposition of the Nodowessies, or Sioux, towards us, with the additional information, that five nations or tribes had already assembled, with a determination to cut us off . Robinson was sixty-six years of age, and was one of the first settlers in Kentucky. He had been in several engagements with the Indians there, who really made it to the first settlers, what its name imports, "The Bloody Ground." In one of these engagements he was [86] scalped, and has since been obliged to wear a handkerchief on his head to protect the part. The wind being fair, we this day made considerable progress, and had many fine views of the bluffs, along which, from the L'Eau qui Court, we observed excellent roads made by the buffaloes. These roads I had frequent opportunities of examining, and am of opinion that no engineer could have laid them out more judiciously.

27th.- The weather continues fine, as it has been for the last fortnight, and is delightful. For some days past it has been very warm, and the carcases of drowned buffaloes on the islands and shores of the river become extremely offensive. We had a fine breeze from the S. E. and made all the sail the extreme cowardice of our Canadians would permit, in order to reach Little Cedar Island[20], as it was intended that we should stop there to procure new masts, some of our old ones being defective. Late in the evening we accomplished our purpose to the joy of our voyageurs, who frequently in the course of the day, when the boats heeled, cried out in agony, " *0 mon Dieu! abattez le goile*. " As we had now in our party five men who had traversed the Rocky Mountains in various directions, [87] the best possible route in which to cross them became a subject of anxious enquiry. They all agreed that the route followed by Lewis and Clarke was very far from being the best, and that to the southward, where the head waters of the Platte and Roche Jaune rivers rise, they had discovered a route much less difficult. This information induced Mr. Hunt to change his plan, which had originally been to ascend the Missouri to the Roche Jaune river, one thousand eight hundred and eighty miles from the mouth, and at that place to commence his journey by land. It was now concluded that it would be more adviseable to abandon the Missouri at the Aricara Town, four hundred and fifty miles lower down the river.

28th.- We arose at day-break, and the men soon found trees suitable for masts. Whilst they were preparing them, I employed myself in examining this delightful spot. The island is about three quarters of a mile in length, and five hundred yards in width. The middle part is covered with the finest cedar, round which there is a border from sixty to eighty yards in width, in which were innumerable clumps of rose and currant bushes, mixed with grape vines, all in flower, and extremely fragrant. The currant is a new and elegant species, and is described [88] by Pursh[21] as *ribes aureum*. Betwixt the clumps and amongst the cedars, the buffaloes, elks, and antelopes had made paths, which were covered with grass and flowers. I have never seen a place, however embellished by art, equal to this in beauty. In a few hours the masts were completed, and we proceeded on our voyage with a fine breeze in our favour. Since our departure from L'Eau qui Court I noticed that the bluffs had gradually continued to change in appearance. The quantity of alluvion on the border of the river decreased as we proceeded, and has now entirely vanished. The bluffs continue in a regular declivity from their summits to the edge of the river, and the narrowness of the valley indicates a country formed of such hard materials as to oppose considerable resistance to the abrasion of the river. On these bluffs, and at about half the distance from the summit to the river, I began to notice a number of places of a deep brown colour, apparently divested of vegetation. They occurred on both sides of the river, with an exact correspondence in altitude and breadth, and exhibited the appearance of two interrupted lines running as far as the bluffs could be seen. As we were now in an enemy's country, it [89] was with reluctance Mr. Hunt suffered me to land a little before dinner, when I proceeded to examine one of these spots. I found it almost entirely covered with iron ore, of that species called by Kirwan *compact iron stone*; in Waller Syst. 2, p. 144, *haematitis solidus*. Its specific gravity is 3.482. The oxidation of the ore had so changed the earth, that it resembled Spanish brown, and nothing grew on it but a few scattered shrubs of a species of *artemisia*, apparently a non-descript. I hastened to the boats, in which we kept our sails up the rest of the day, the bodies of ore becoming longer and more frequent as we proceeded. We travelled eighteen miles, and encamped one hour after sunset.

29th.- Some arrangements being necessary, the boats did not set out so early as usual, and daylight opened to our view one of the most interesting prospects I had ever seen. We had encamped at the commencement of a stretch of the river, about fifteen miles in length, as we judged, and nearly in a right line. The bluffs on both sides formed, as before, a gentle slope to the river, and not a single tree was visible. The body of iron ore had now become continuous on both sides of the river, and exhibited the appearance of two dark brown stripes, about one hundred yards in breadth, and fifteen miles long. The exact conformity of the two lines, and the contrast of colour produced [90] by the vivid green which bounded them, formed a coup d'oeil which I have never seen paralleled. I lamented much that the wind was fair, but availed myself of the short delay, and hastened up the bluff to the vein of ore, where, although the soil was so strongly impregnated with iron as to resemble rust, I observed a number of large white flowers on the ground, belonging to a new species of *aenothera*, having neither stem nor scape, the flower sitting immediately on the root. On a signal being given from the boats, I was obliged to return, and had no further opportunity to examine this enormous body of ore, without doubt sufficient to supply the whole of North America with iron for thousands of years: and if we combine in the same view the abundance of coal on the Missouri, it warrants a presumption that in some future age it will become an object of vast national importance.

30th.- We set out this morning with a favourable wind, which continued during the whole of the day; and the course of the river being less crooked than usual, we made thirty miles, and slept on an island.

31st.- Before breakfast this morning we discovered two Indians on a bluff on the north-east side of the river: we stopped opposite to them to breakfast, during which they frequently harangued [91] us in a loud tone of voice. After we had breakfasted, Mr. Hunt crossed the river to speak to them, and took with him Dorion, the interpreter. We noticed, that when he landed, one of the Indians went away, but immediately after re-appeared on

horseback, and went at full speed over the bluffs. Mr. Hunt informed us on his return, that these Indians belonged to the Sioux nations; that three tribes were encamped about a league from us, and had two hundred and eighty lodges. They were the Yangtons Ahnah, the Tetons Bois Brule, and the Tetons Min-na-kine-azzo. The Indian informed Mr. Hunt that they had been waiting for us eleven days, with a decided intention of opposing our progress, as they would suffer no one to trade with the Ricaras, Mandans, and Minaterees, being at war with those nations. It is usual to reckon two warriors to each lodge; we therefore found that we had to oppose near six hundred savages, with the character of whom we were well acquainted;[22] [92] and it had also been stated by the Indian that they were in daily expectation of being joined by two other tribes, Tetons Okandandas and Tetons Sahone. We proceeded up the river, and passed along an island, which for about half an hour intercepted our view of the northeast side of the river. On reaching the upper point we had a view of the bluffs, and saw the Indians pouring down in great numbers, some on horseback, and others on foot. They soon took possession of a point a little above us, and ranged themselves along the bank of the river. By the help of our glasses, we could perceive that they were all armed and painted for war. Their arms consisted chiefly of bows and arrows, but a few had short carbines: they were also provided with round shields. We had an ample sufficiency of arms for the whole party, which [93] now consisted of sixty men; and besides our small arms, we had a swivel and two howitzers. Any attempt to avoid the Indians would have been abortive, as a boat, in ascending the Missouri, can only effect it by going along the edges of the river, it being wholly impossible to stem the middle current; and as the banks are in many places high and perpendicular, we must inevitably be frequently in their power, as they might several times in the course of a day shower a volley of arrows upon us, and retire unseen. Our alternative, therefore, was, as we supposed, either to fight them or return. The former was immediately decided on, and we landed nearly opposite to the main body. Our first care was to put all the arms in complete order: afterwards the swivel and the howitzers were loaded with powder only, and fired to impress them with an idea that we were well prepared. They were then heavily loaded, and with as many bullets as it was supposed they would bear, after which we crossed the river. When we arrived within about one hundred yards of them, the boats were stationed, and all seized their arms. The Indians now seemed to be in confusion, and when we rose up to fire, they spread their buffaloe robes before them, and moved them from side to side. Our interpreter called out, and desired us not to fire, as the action indicated, on their part, a wish to avoid an engagement, and to [94] come to a parley. We accordingly desisted, and saw about fourteen of the chiefs separate themselves from the crowd who were on the summit of the bank, and descend to the edge of the river, where they sat down on the sand, forming themselves into a portion of a circle, in the centre of which we could see preparations making to kindle a fire, evidently with a design to smoke the calumet with us, and signs were made, inviting us to land. Mr. Hunt requested that Messrs. Crooks, M'Kenzie, Miller, and M'Clellan would attend him in his boat, and I accompanied Mr. M'Kenzie. The object was to consider whether it was advisable to put so much confidence in so ferocious and faithless a set, as to accept the invitation. It did not require much deliberation, as we found ourselves under the necessity of either fighting or treating with them; it was therefore determined to hazard the experiment of going ashore. The party who remained in the boats were ordered to continue in readiness to fire on the Indians instantly, in case of treachery, and Messrs. Hunt, M'Kenzie, Crooks, Miller, and M'Clellan, with the interpreter and myself, went ashore. We found the chiefs sitting where they had first placed themselves, as motionless as statues; and without any hesitation or delay, we sat down on the sand in such a manner as to complete the circle. When we were all seated, the pipe was [95] brought by an Indian, who seemed to act as priest on this occasion: he stepped within the circle, and lighted the pipe. The head was made of a red stone, known by mineralogists under the term of *killas*, and is often found to accompany copper ore: it is procured on the river St. Peter's, one of the principal branches of the Mississippi. The stem of the pipe was at least six feet in length, and highly decorated with tufts of horse hair, dyed red. After the pipe was lighted, he held it up towards the sun, and afterwards pointed it towards the sky in different directions.

He then handed it to the great chief, who smoked a few whiffs, and taking the head

of the pipe in his hand, commenced by applying the other end to the lips of Mr. Hunt, and afterwards did the same to every one in the circle. When this ceremony was ended, Mr. Hunt rose, and made a speech in French, which was translated as he proceeded into the Sioux language, by Dorion. The purport of the speech was to state, that the object of our voyage up the Missouri was not to trade; that several of our brothers had gone to the great salt lake in the west, whom we had not seen for eleven moons; that we had come from the great salt lake in the east, on our way to see our brothers, for whom we had been *crying* ever since they left us; and our lives were now become so miserable for the want of our brothers, that we would rather die than not go to [96] them, and would kill every man that should oppose our passage: that we had heard of their design to prevent our passage up the river, but we did not wish to believe it, as we were determined to persist, and were, as they might see, well prepared to effect our purpose; but as a proof of our pacific intentions, we had brought them a present of tobacco and corn. About fifteen carrottes of tobacco, and as many bags of corn, were now brought from the boat, and laid in a heap near the great chief, who then rose and began a speech, which was repeated in French by Dorion.

He commenced by stating that they were at war with the Ricaras, Mandans, and Gros Ventres or Minaterees, and that it would be an injury to them if these nations were furnished with arms and ammunition; but as they found we were only going to our brothers, they would not attempt to stop us: that he also had brothers at a considerable distance northward, whom he had not seen for a great many moons, and for whom he also had been *crying*. He professed himself satisfied with our present, and advised us to encamp on the other side of the river, for fear his *young men* should be troublesome. When the speech was ended, we all rose, shook hands, and returned to the boats. During the conference, I had an opportunity of noticing these Indians, a great number of whom were assembled on the bank above us, and observed that [97] they are in stature considerably below the Osages, Mahas, and Poncars, and much less robust. They are also more deficient in clothing and ornaments, a considerable number being entirely naked, but all armed. Several of our party were acquainted with these tribes, and represent them much as described by Lewis. Although the squaws are very ill treated by all Indians, it is said they are treated much worse by the Sioux than any other tribe, whence it follows that mothers frequently destroy their female children, alleging as a reason, that it is better they should die than continue a life so miserable as that to which they are doomed. Amongst the Sioux women, it is also said, suicide is not unfrequent, and the mode which they adopt to put an end to their existence, is, by hanging themselves. They are of opinion that suicide is displeasing to the *Father of Life*, and believe it will be punished in the *land of spirits* by their ghosts being doomed for ever to drag the tree on which they hung themselves: for this reason they always suspend themselves to as small a tree as can possibly sustain their weight. In the course of the afternoon we met a chief who belonged to a party of Teton Okandandas, which consisted, he said, of thirty lodges. He requested to have a passage in the boats for the remainder of the day. It was granted to him, and he remained with us during the night.

[98] June 1.- This morning the old chief was conveyed over the river, and landed on the opposite side, as he said he expected to meet his people, but we did not see him again. In the afternoon we entered upon the Great Bend, or, as the French call it, the Grand Detour, and encamped about five miles above the lower entrance. This bend is said to be twenty-one miles in circuit by the course of the river, and only nineteen hundred yards across the neck.

2d.- In the morning early we discovered two Indians standing on the bluffs, who upon discovering us, spread their buffalo robes to denote that they were amicably inclined towards us. We crossed over the river, and when we approached them, they extended their arms in a horizontal position. This action, I was informed, was an appeal to our clemency. When we landed they showed evident symptoms of alarm. This was soon accounted for by Messrs. Crooks, M'Clellan, and Miller, who informed us that they knew these fellows, and that they were chiefs of the Sahonies and Okanandans, who the year preceding had behaved extremely ill, by plundering and otherwise maltreating them, in such a manner as

to render it necessary for their safety to escape down the river in the night, and abandon the trade with [99] the upper Indians for that year, which had been a great loss to them. They seemed very apprehensive that Mr. Crooks would now resent their conduct; but after we had smoked with them they became more tranquil. During the smoking, Mr. Hunt asked them why they killed white men, as he heard that they had killed three during the last summer? They replied, because the white men kill us: that man (pointing to Carson) killed one of our brothers last summer. This was true. Carson, who was at that time among the Ricaras, fired across the Missouri at a war party of Sioux, and it was by a very extraordinary chance he killed one of them, as the river is full half a mile in breadth, and in retaliation the Sioux killed three white men. I observed that, as before, in smoking the pipe they did not make use of tobacco, but the bark of *cornus sanguinea*, or red dog wood, mixed with the leaves of *rhus glabrum*, or smooth sumach. This mixture they call kinnikineck. After we had smoked, they spoke of the poverty of their tribes, and concluded by saying they expected a present. A few carrottes of tobacco and bags of corn were laid at their feet, with which they appeared satisfied. As these were the last of the Sioux tribes we expected to meet, I now determined to walk all day, and was much pleased that the restraint imposed on me by the proximity of these vagabonds was [100] removed. I therefore proceeded up the bluffs nearly abreast of the boats. In about a quarter of an hour afterwards two other Indians rode hastily past me, and overtook the boats. I observed that they had a short conference with Mr. Hunt, when they turned their horses about, and again rode past me, seemingly in a rage. Mr. Hunt called to me, and requested that I would come on board instantly, when he informed me that these fellows were also chiefs, and had seen our presents, with which they were much dissatisfied, and in consequence had followed the boats to extort more. In reply to their insolent demands, Mr. Hunt informed them that "he had given all he intended to give, and would give no more," adding, "that he was much displeased by their importunity, and if they or any of their nation again followed us with similar demands, he would consider them as enemies, and treat them as such." As we were not exactly acquainted with the strength of these two tribes, and expected that, in consequence of the disappointment in their rapacious demands, they would attack us, it was arranged that the large boat should ascend on the N. E. side of the river, and the three small boats on the S. W. as the bluffs on either side of the river can be seen much better from the opposite side; and it was agreed that the signal on seeing Indians [101] should be two shots fired in quick succession. As we had not much apprehension of being attacked on the S. W. side, I went ashore after dinner, and continued along the river nearly on a line with the boats, and about four o'clock heard the signal given of Indians being seen. I instantly ran towards the boats, and arrived as they were preparing to quit the shore to aid Mr. Hunt and his party in the large boat, who were then apparently in the most imminent danger. They had passed betwixt a large sand bar and the shore, and it was evident to us that at that juncture they found the water too shallow at the upper end, and were under the necessity of turning back. The sand bar prevented the possibility of putting out into the river, and we saw with horror that at least a hundred Indians had arrived on the bank at the lower end of the bar: we could also perceive that they were a war party, as they were painted with black and white stripes, and all had shields.[23] We had every reason to conclude that these were the Teton Okandandas and the Teton Sahonies, and our anxiety for the safety [102] of Mr. Hunt and the party in the large boat was indescribable when we saw large bodies of Indians every moment arrive at the point near which he must unavoidably pass, before we could possibly give him any assistance: but our anxiety was changed to surprise on seeing the boat pass within a short distance of them unmolested; soon after which the Indians ran along the bank to the upper end of the sand bar, threw down their arms, their shields, and their buffalo robes, and plunged into the river in crowds to meet us; and before we could reach the sand bar, they were round our boats, holding up their hands in such numbers, that it became tiresome to shake hands with so many. We now found that this was a war party, consisting of Aricaras, Mandans, and Minetarees, or Gros Ventres, who were coming against the Sioux, and having discovered us, had determined for the present to abandon the enterprise, expecting that on our arrival at the Arrears Town they should obtain a supply of fire arms and ammunition, which would give them a superiority over their enemies. During the ceremony of shaking hands we were

joined by the large boat, and it was agreed that we should encamp at the first convenient place. We soon found one that was suitable, and the Indians fixed their camp about one hundred yards from ours. I now ascertained that the party consisted of nearly three hundred warriors. As we [103] had plenty of provisions, a supply was given to the Indians, who prepared their supper, after which the chiefs and principal warriors came to our tents. In Mr. M'Kenzie's tent there were seven of them, none of whom appeared to me to be lower than five feet ten inches, and some were more than six feet. Most of them had very good countenances, differing from the heavy face of the Osage, and the keen visage of the Sioux. One of them who had an aquiline nose, had a scarified line running along each arm, which met on his stomach. This our interpreter informed us was done to show his grief for the death of his father. Whilst I was endeavouring to converse with him, an Indian boy came into the tent, and handed water round to the chiefs in a gourd shell tied to the end of a stick. He spoke to the boy, who went out, but soon returned with a new pair of ornamented mockasons, and handed them to the warrior, who it then appeared had observed that mine were dirty and much worn, as he took them off my feet, and put on the new pair, which he tied himself. Observing that he had a short carbine and powder flask, I begged to look at the latter, and finding it only contained a very small quantity of powder, I immediately filled it from my own flask. He was greatly pleased with the acquisition of so much powder, and informed me that he was a Ricara, and should meet me at their town, where we should be brothers. We [104] were interrupted by one of the chiefs crying "How," which signifies among the Indians, "Come on, " or "let us begin." This occasioned silence, and he began to strike on one hand with a war club which he held in the other. It had a globular head, on one side of which was fixed the blade of a knife, five or six inches in length. The head was hollow, and contained small bits of metal, which made a jingling noise as he struck it in quick time. The singing now commenced, and continued at intervals until past midnight. The song is very rude, and it does not appear that they combine the expression of ideas and music, the whole of their singing consisting in the repetition of the word *ha* six or seven times in one tone, after which they rise or fall a third, fourth, or fifth, and the same in quick time. I observed that their voices were in perfect unison, and although, according to our ideas of music, there was neither harmony nor melody, yet the effect was pleasing, as there was evidently system, all the changes of tone being as exactly conformable in point of time, as if only one voice had been heard. Whenever their performance ceased, the termination was extremely abrupt, by pronouncing the word *how* in a quick and elevated tone .

On the morning of the 3d, the chiefs declared to Mr. Hunt their intention of immediately returning [105] to their nation, where they expected to arrive in three days, although they had been sixteen days in coming out. They also demanded some arms and ammunition. This demand, being conformable to the custom of war parties, had been foreseen, but was not complied with, Mr. Hunt informing them, that when we arrived at their nation, we should furnish abundance. After we had left them, the chief overtook us on horseback, and said that his people were not satisfied to go home without some proof of their having seen the white men. Mr. Hunt could not now resist, and gave him a cask of powder, a bag of balls, and three dozen of knives, with which he was much pleased. Whilst the articles were delivering to him, an Indian came running up, and informed us that there was a boat in sight, coming up the river. We immediately concluded that it was the boat belonging to **Manuel Lisa**, and after proceeding five or six miles, we waited for it. I was much pleased on the boat's joining us, to find that ***Mr. Henry Brackenridge*** was along with Mr. Lisa; I became acquainted with him at St. Louis, and found him a very amiable and interesting young man. Mr. Lisa had made the greatest possible exertions to overtake us, being well apprised of the hostile disposition of the Sioux. He had met a boat, which, it appeared, had passed us in the night, and the people informed him that they had been fired upon by the [106] Indians. As the conjunct party now consisted of ninety men, and we were approaching the nations that were at war with the Sioux, our fears almost subsided; for myself, I was much gratified on finding the restraints removed which had so long circumscribed my motions. In the early part of this day the wind was fair, but after we had proceeded some miles, it changed to north-east, and blew so strong, that we could not stem the torrent, which was increased by the rising of the river. I went to the bluffs, which

in this part are of considerable elevation, but rise in a gentle slope from the river: near the summit is a stratum of deep brown-coloured earth, from two to three hundred feet in breadth, on the declivity of the hill. This earth appears mostly to consist of decomposed iron ore, and is evidently a continuation of that seen near Little Cedar Island, although distant from it near a hundred miles in a right line. I observed, that uniformly the flat tops of the hills were almost covered with masses of stone, chiefly *breccia*. There was something so singularly constant in this appearance, that I was tempted to attend to a particular examination, and became convinced that these groupes of stone were the *passive* cause of the hills. If the group was of an oblong form, the hill was a *ridge*; if it was nearly circular, the hill was a *cone*. It would be difficult to describe the sensations occasioned by a view at once of these hills [107] and the valley of the Missouri. The mind is irresistibly impressed with the belief that the whole surface of the surrounding country was once *at least* on a level with the tops of these hills; and that all below has been carried away by the erosion of water, from which it has been protected in the parts where these stones were collected.[24] I remarked this day, that the wolves were more numerous and more daring than in any former part of our voyage. Within the last week we frequently saw a few every day, but now, some of them were almost constantly in sight, and so fearless, as frequently to stand at no great distance to gaze. For the present, they were protected by their worthlessness, their skins being out of season. It appears that in a natural state, the wolf is a *diurnal* animal; but in the neighbourhood of condensed and stationary population its habits change, and it becomes *nocturnal*.[25] On my route this day I saw numerous colonies of the prairie dog; and from the frequency of the occurrence, I noticed that my approach to their [108] burrows was announced by the screams of a species of curlew. I shot one, and ascertained it to be a variety of *scolopax arquata*; and perceived, after I noticed the fact, that the alarm was invariably given. On my return to the boats, I found that some of the leaders of our party were extremely apprehensive of treachery on the part of Mr. Lisa, who being now no longer in fear of the Sioux, they suspected had an intention of quitting us shortly, and of doing us an injury with the Aricaras. Independent of this feeling, it had required all the address of Mr. Hunt to prevent Mr. M'Clellan or Mr. Crooks from calling him to account for instigating the Sioux to treat them ill the preceding year. Besides, it was believed by all, that although apparently friendly, he was anxiously desirous that the expedition should fail. Lisa had twenty oars, and made much greater expedition than we could; it was evident, therefore, that he had it in his power to leave us, and it was determined to watch his conduct narrowly.

4th.- The boats did not make much way, and I walked chiefly on and beyond the bluffs, which I found of the same description as those observed yesterday, and on still farther examination, became more confirmed in my opinion regarding the origin of the hills. On the summit of one I found some fragments of bones in a petrified state, apparently [109] belonging to the buffalo. I had for some time past noticed on the declivities circular spaces of about six or seven feet in diameter, wholly divested of every kind of vegetation, and covered with small gravel. The frequent occurrence of these this day attracted my more particular attention, and I found that they were caused by a large species of black ant, hundreds of which were running in every direction within the area with astonishing activity. On finding a large beetle, I put it in the centre of one of these areas, when it was instantly seized by those nearest to it. For a short time the ants were dragged along with ease; but by some unknown and surprising faculty the intelligence was immediately spread throughout the whole space: the ants ran from every direction towards the centre, and in a few seconds the poor beetle became completely covered, and escape was impossible.

5th.- We had not proceeded more than four miles before a very heavy rain commenced, and we were compelled to stop and fix up the tents. I went as usual to the bluffs, and on my return to secure some interesting specimens of plants, found that Lisa had encamped about one hundred yards above us. After I had dried my clothes, I again visited the bluffs in company with Mr. Brackenridge. We discovered on the bank of a small creek the remains of an Indian encampment, which had [110] apparently been occupied by a considerable number, and for some time, as there was a great quantity of bones spread on the ground, and the marks where the wigwams stood were numerous. We agreed that the situation was judiciously chosen to prevent surprise. On ascending the hills, and looking over the summit, we observed near us a small herd of buffaloes, consisting of

two cows and three bulls. We immediately drew back, and taking advantage of a ravine, approached within thirty or forty yards, and fired. We wounded one of the cows, which Mr. Brackenridge pursued. Several other herds of buffaloes were in view, and some antelopes or cabri. I found the hills all capped with stones, and was still more confirmed in my opinion respecting their formation by observing some large detached blocks, each lying on a small pyramid of clay. After Mr. Brackenridge joined me, we saw a large hare, *lepus variabilis*, the first I had noticed, and also a number of wolves in several directions, and returning through an extensive colony of prairie dogs, we regained the boats. Immediately on my return to our camp, a circumstance happened that for some time threatened to produce tragical consequences. We learned that, during our absence, Mr. Lisa had invited Dorion, our interpreter, to his boat, where he had given him some whiskey, and took that opportunity of avowing his intention to take him away from [111] Mr. Hunt, in consequence of a debt due by Dorion to the Missouri Fur Company, for whom Lisa was agent. Dorion had often spoken to us of this debt, and in terms of great indignation at the manner in which it had been incurred, alleging, that he had been charged the most exorbitant prices for articles had at Fort Mandan, and in particular ten dollars per quart for whiskey. Some harsh words having passed betwixt him and Lisa, he returned to our camp. On the instant of my arrival, Mr. Lisa came to borrow a *cordeau*, or towing-line, from Mr. Hunt, and being perceived by Dorion, he instantly sprang out of his tent, and struck him. Lisa flew into the most violent rage, crying out, *"O mon Dieu! ou est mon couteau!"* and ran precipitately to his boat. As it was expected he would return armed, Dorion got a pair of pistols, and took his ground, the party ranging themselves in order to witness the event. Soon after Mr. Lisa appeared without pistols; but it was observed that he had his knife in his girdle. As Dorion had disclosed what had passed in Lisa's boat, Messrs. Crooks and M'Clellan were each very eager to take up the quarrel, but were restrained by Mr. Hunt, until an expression from Lisa, conveying an imputation upon himself, made him equally desirous of fighting. He told Lisa that the matter should be settled by themselves, and desired him to fetch his pistols. I followed Lisa to his boat, [112] accompanied by Mr. Brackenridge, and we with difficulty prevented a meeting, which, in the present temper of the parties, would certainly have been a bloody one.

The river had risen considerably during the night, and we were now convinced that the floods we had before encountered, and which were of short duration, were only partial, and caused by the rising of the tributary streams that have their sources in the lower regions. The periodical flood is occasioned by the melting of the snows on the Rocky Mountains, and the plains at their feet. The boats ascended with difficulty, which gave opportunities for walking the whole of the day. In the early part, we passed the remains of an old Aricara village. The scite was indicated by an embankment, on which there had been pallisadoes, as the remains were still visible. Within the area, the vestiges of the lodges were very apparent, and great quantities of bones and fragments of earthenware were scattered in every part. The wolves are still numerous, and are mostly of a light grey colour, with a few black hairs intermixed on the hind part of the back: they are seen singly, and although not timid, show no disposition to attack. Happening to come on one this day suddenly and unperceived, I shot him. He was large, and appeared to be old, as his teeth were much worn. [113] The country beyond the bluffs continues still very fine, but cut up in many places by deep ravines, occasioned by torrents during heavy rains. The sides of these ravines uniformly exhibited an under stratum of hard yellow clay, of an indeterminate depth.

7th.- Went out early on the S. W. side, with some of the hunters, and on reaching the summit of the bluffs, observed, in a westwardly direction, a range of high hills, apparently at the distance of thirty or forty miles. These, I was informed by the hunters, bounded the Chien or Chayenne River. Two buffaloes were killed, and one cabri, or antelope. The hunter who killed the last assured me that he had allured it by putting a handkerchief at the end of his ramrod, and lying down, continued to wave it, whilst he remained concealed. The animal, it seems, after a long contest betwixt curiosity and fear,

approached near enough to become a sacrifice to the former.

8th.- Since the affair of the 5th, our party have had no intercourse with that of Mr. Lisa, as he kept at a distance from us, and mostly on the opposite side of the river. This deprived me of the society of my friend Brackenridge. I regretted this circumstance, and purposed to join him this morning, but was prevented by our stopping [114] on an island to breakfast, where our hunters killed two buffaloe and two elks. Of the former we had for some days past seen a great number of herds, consisting of from fifty to a hundred in each. On expressing my surprise at seeing so many, the hunters assured me, that so far from its being extraordinary, they had been in the expectation of seeing them in much greater numbers. Some of the hunters, who had been six or eight years about the head of the Missouri, said they had seen them during their annual migrations from north to south in autumn, and to the northward in spring; and agreed in stating, that at these times they assemble in vast herds, and march in regular order. Some asserted that they had been able to distinguish where the herds were even when beyond the bounds of the visible horizon, by the vapour which arose from their bodies. Others stated that they had seen herds extending many miles in length. It appeared also to be a well known fact among them, that in these periodical migrations, they are much less fearful of the hunter. I must observe of the hunters, that any accounts which I heard from them, and afterwards had an opportunity to prove, I found to be correct;[26] and when the great [115] extent of this plain, and its fertility in grass are considered, we cannot but admit that the number of animals it is capable of containing must be immense. [116] In the forenoon we passed the mouth of Chayenne River, where it is four hundred yards in width. It is described by the hunters as being a very fine river, and navigable for several hundred miles. We encamped this night in a beautiful grove, ornamented with a number of rose and currant bushes, entwined with grape vines, now in bloom.

9th.- Mr. M'Clellan, with two of our men, and three belonging to Lisa, were despatched to the Aricaras, to apprise them of our coming, and to see how far it was practicable to procure horses for the journey by land. Soon after we set out, we saw a great number of buffaloe on both sides of the river, over which several herds were swimming. Notwithstanding all the efforts made by these poor animals, the rapidity of the current brought numbers of them within a few yards of our boats, and three were killed. We might have obtained a [117] great many more, but for once we did not kill *because* it was in our power to do so; but several were killed from Lisa's boat. In the evening Mr. Lisa encamped a little above us, and we were informed by his party, that about sun-set they had seen six Indians.

10th. - A fine breeze sprang up early in the day, and we proceeded rapidly. About noon Mr. M'Clellan and his party appeared on the bank of the river, having found that they could not reach the Aricara nation before the boats. About the middle of the afternoon, we met a canoe with three Indians. They had come from the Aricaras, where intelligence of our approach had been brought by the war party that met us on the 1st. They had made a great parade of the presents, which they received from us, and of the exploit which they had achieved in discovering the white men coming. They reported that the Mandans, who were of the party, had urged an attack on Mr. Hunt's boat, when it was in the situation already described, which they (the Aricaras) had prevented. They also stated, that the Minetarees, or Gros Ventres Indians, had killed two white men on the river above the Missouri Fur Company's fort. We encamped three miles above the mouth of the river *Cer-wer-cer-na*, after travelling thirty-five miles.

[118] 11th.- We hoped this day to arrive at the Aricaras, but did not derive so much benefit from the wind as we expected; and after passing the river *Ma-ra-pa*, encamped about six miles below the town, near an island on which they were formerly settled.

12th.- During this night we had a severe thunder storm, accompanied by torrents of rain, so that our beds were completely wet. We set out early, and about half way to the town, met a canoe with two chiefs, and an interpreter, who is a Frenchman, and has lived with this tribe more than twenty years. He married a squaw, and has several children. The chiefs were good looking men: one of them is called the head chief, or king, and is named by the French *Le Gauche*, being left-handed; the other is the war chief, and called the *Big Man*. The interpreter informed us that the chiefs had come to a resolution to oppose our farther progress up the river, unless a boat was left to trade with them. Mr. Hunt explained to the chiefs the object of his voyage, and that he would willingly trade for horses. About ten o'clock we landed on the north side, opposite the town, or rather towns, as there are two distinct bands, and their villages are about eighty yards apart. Our first care was to spread out the beds and baggage to dry. Whilst [119] the men were occupied in this business, the chief informed us, from the other side of the river, that he would be ready to meet us in council when we should chuse to come over. As the river is here at least eight or nine hundred yards in breadth, it may appear surprising that he could make himself understood at so great a distance; but to those who have heard the Indian languages spoken, and who are acquainted with the Indians, it will appear very credible. In all the Indian languages which I have heard, every syllable of the compound words is accented; as, for instance, the primitive name of this nation, *Starrahe* they pronounce *Stăr-ră-hĕ*. In addition to this construction of their languages, the Indians have remarkably loud voices. The leaders of our two parties had not yet spoken to each other since the affair of the 5th; nor had any communication, except through the medium of Mr. Brackenridge or myself.

It was evident that Lisa was still suspected; and M'Clellan, in particular, carefully watched his motions, determined to shoot him if he attempted to cross the river before us, to attend the council of the Indians, contrary to what had been previously agreed upon with Mr. Brackenridge on his behalf. Soon after noon Mr. Hunt manned the large boat, and with Messrs. M'Kenzie and M'Clellan, went over the river; Lisa also attended in his barge. Mr. Brackenridge and myself were of the party. [120] On landing, amongst a crowd of Indians, we were conducted to the council lodge by some chiefs who met us; where we sat down on buff aloe skins prepared for us, and spread on the ground. I noticed that this lodge was constructed in a manner similar to those already described, belonging to the Ottoes. An old Indian lighted the pipe, and handed it to the chief; after which he squatted himself on his hams, near the entrance of the lodge. Although there were nearly twenty present, I learned from Dorion, (near whom I had placed myself) that several of the chiefs were not yet assembled. After we had smoked for a short time, *Le Gauche*, the chief, spoke to the old Indian at the door, who went out of the lodge: he soon after appeared on the top, and was visible to us through the hole left for the smoke. What the chief dictated to him from within, he bawled out aloud, with the lungs of a stentor. I understood that his object was to summon the chiefs to council, and it was promptly obeyed, as in ten minutes all were assembled. I learned that although we had smoked, the council pipe had not yet been

lighted: this was now done by the same old Indian, who it seems was both priest and herald. *Le Gauche* made the customary appeal to the Great Spirit, by puffing the smoke in different directions towards heaven and earth; after which the pipe was applied to the lips of each assembled, the chief still holding [121] it. He then opened the council by a short speech: in the first place he spoke of their poverty, but said that they were very glad to see us, and would be still more glad to trade with us. Lisa replied, and expressed his intention to trade, if they did not rate their buffaloe and beaver too highly. He then mentioned Mr. Hunt and his party as his friends, and said he should join them in resenting and repelling any injury or insult. Mr. Hunt declared that the object of his journey was not to trade, but to see our brothers, at the great salt lake in the west; for that undertaking he should now want horses, as he purposed to go thence by land, and that he had plenty of goods to exchange, if they would spare the horses. Mr. Lisa and Mr. Hunt accompanied their speeches by suitable presents of tobacco. *Le Gauche* spoke, and expressed the satisfaction of his people at our coming, and their attachment to the white men. In respect to the trade with Mr. Lisa, he wished for more time to fix the price of dried buffaloe skins, (usually called buffaloe robes) being an article they had most of: his present idea of the price was thirty loads-of powder and ball for each robe. Respecting Mr. Hunt's proposition, he was certain they could not spare the number of horses that he understood he wanted; and that he did not think they ought to sell any horses. *Les Yeux Gris*, another chief, replied to the latter part of his [122] speech, by stating that they might easily spare Mr. Hunt a considerable number of horses, as they could readily replace them by stealing or by smoking.[27] These arguments governed the opinions of the chiefs, and it was determined to open a trade for horses, when they were satisfied with the price Mr. Hunt purposed to give. The council now broke up, and Messrs. Hunt, M'Kenzie, M'Clellan, Dorion, and myself were conducted to the lodge of one of their chiefs, where there was a feast of sweet corn, prepared by boiling, and mixing it with buffaloe grease. Accustomed as I now was to the privation of bread and salt, I thought it very palatable. *Sweet corn* is corn gathered before it is ripe, and dried in the sun: it is called by the Americans *green corn*, or *corn in the milk*. I quitted the feast, in order to examine the town, which I found to be fortified all round with a ditch, and with pickets or pallisadoes, of about nine feet high. The lodges are placed [123] without any regard to regularity, which renders it difficult to count them, but there appears to be from a hundred and fifty to a hundred and sixty of them. They are constructed in the same manner as those of the Ottoes, with the additional convenience of a railing on the eaves: behind this railing they sit at their ease and smoke. There is scarcely any declivity in the scite of the town; and as little regard is paid to cleanliness, it is very dirty in wet weather. I spent the remainder of the day in examining the bluffs, to ascertain what new plants might be collected in the neighbourhood; having now, for the first time in the course of our voyage, an opportunity to preserve living specimens. During this time the rest of the boats crossed over the river, and a camp was formed about two hundred yards below the town. Lisa's party was nearer to it than our's.

13th.- The morning being rainy, no business was done in the village until the afternoon, when Mr. Hunt exhibited the kind and quantity of goods he purposed to give for each horse. These were placed in the lodge of *Le Gauche*, for general inspection, and proved to be satisfactory. This day I employed myself in forming a place for the reception of living specimens, a little distance below our camp, and near the river, for the convenience of water.

[124] 14th.- I understood that Lisa and the chiefs had agreed that the price of a buffalo robe should be twenty balls, and twenty loads of powder. He removed a part of his goods to the lodge of *Le Gauche*, and, Mr. Hunt began to trade at the lodge of the *Big Man*. The trade for horses soon commenced: the species of goods most in demand were carbines, powder, ball, tomahawks, knives, &c. as another expedition against the Sioux was meditated. During this traffic, I walked with Mr. Brackenridge to the upper village, which is separated from the lower one by a small stream. In our walk through the town, I was accosted by the *Medicine Man*, or doctor, who was standing at the entrance of a lodge into which we went. It appeared that one of his patients, a boy, was within, for whom he

was preparing some medicine. He made me understand that he had seen me collecting plants, and that he knew me to be a *Medicine Man*. He frequently shook hands with us, and took down his medicine bag, made of deer skin, to show me its contents. As I supposed this bag contained the whole *materia medica* of the nation, I examined it with some attention. There was a considerable quantity of the down of reedmace, (*typha palustris*) which I understood was used in cases of burns or scalds: there was also a quantity of a species of *artemisia*, common on the prairies, and known to the hunters by the name of [125] *hyssop*; but the ingredient which was in the greatest abundance, was a species of wall-flower: in character it agrees with *cheiranthus erysimoides*: besides these, I found two new species of *astragalus*, and some roots of *rudbeckia purpurea*. After examining the contents of the bag, I assured the doctor it was all very good, and we again shook hands with him, and went into several other lodges, where we were very hospitably received. Although they sit on the ground round the fire, buffalo robes were always spread for us, and the pipe was invariably brought out, whilst the squaw prepared something for us to eat: this consisted of dried buffalo meat, mixed with pounded corn, warmed on the fire in an earthen vessel of their own manufacture. Some offered us sweet corn, mixed with beans (*phaseolus*.) The squaws were particularly attentive to us, and took every opportunity to examine such parts of our dress as were manufactured, and not of skins. After our return, I went to the trading house, and found that the trade for horses went on very briskly. The instant a horse was bought, his tail was cropped, to render him more easily distinguished from those belonging to the Indians, which are in all respects as nature formed them. On my return to our camp, I found the warrior there with whom I had become acquainted on the 1st instant. He insisted so much on my going to his lodge, that I went with him; where [126] he spread a very finely painted buffalo robe for me to sit on, and shewed me by signs that it was now mine. In return I gave him a pair of silver bracelets, with ornaments for the ears and hair, having brought a considerable quantity of those articles from St. Louis. With these he was so much pleased, that he requested me to sleep at his lodge during our stay, and informed me that his sister should be my bedfellow. This offer I declined, alleging as an excuse, that I had voluntarily engaged to assist in keeping guard round our camp. I found, on my return, that the principals of our party were engaged in a very serious consultation on our present situation. All our fresh provisions were exhausted, and of the dried buffaloe bought from the Poncars, not more remained than was thought necessary to reserve for the journey by land: of Indian corn we had left only a few bags, which it was thought expedient to parch, grind, and mix with sugar, in order to apply it to the same object. It had been this day ascertained that the Aricaras could not spare us any provisions, as the excessive rains had penetrated into their *caches*,[28] and spoiled the whole of their reserved stock, so [127] that they expected to be in want themselves before the harvest would come in. In addition to our difficulties, a rumour had been spread this afternoon, and it was believed, that the Sioux had followed us, and were now in the neighbourhood, to the amount of four or five hundred. Whether this was true or not, the consequences were the same to us, as our hunters could not, with any degree of prudence, be suffered to go out; nor indeed were they willing. In this dilemma, no means could be thought of for the removal of our difficulties, but to purchase from the Indians some of their spare dogs, particularly those employed in dragging their sledges, and this measure was resolved on. It may here be remarked, that horses and dogs are the only animals which the Indians domesticate: of the latter they have two varieties: one of these they employ in hunting; the other appears to be of a stupid and lazy nature, always remaining about the village, and employed as above mentioned.

15th.-In conformity with the measure determined upon last evening, a number of dogs were purchased this morning, brought to the camp, and shot for breakfast. I went out to collect, accompanied by Mr. Brackenridge, and proceeded farther into the interior than I had before done. I was rewarded by finding several new species of plants, and by an additional confirmation of the geological [128] formations, as the hills situated at a distance from the river have uniformly flat summits, covered with fragments of rock, mixed with smaller stones and gravel. On our return, when about three miles from the camp, we saw Indians pouring out from the village, some on horseback, others on foot, and all at full

speed. They went in a direction to our right, towards some hills, five or six miles distant down the river. A young Indian, soon after, in passing us at some distance, changed his course, and came up to me. He spoke with great earnestness, frequently pointing to the hills, on the tops of which I observed some horsemen apparently meeting each other, and after passing, turn back, and continue galloping. I at length comprehended that enemies were near, and that seeing me only armed with a pistol, he wished me to hasten to the camp. When we came nearer the town, I observed that the tops of the lodges were crowded with women, children, and old men, all looking earnestly towards the hills, and considerable numbers were still running past our camp. I now enquired the cause of the tumult, and found that a signal had been given, indicating the appearance of a war party of the Sioux. The noise and confusion were such as I have not often witnessed: the war whoop was heard in every direction, and even the old men in the village were busily employed in animating the warriors. Some aged Nestors tottered [129] along with the crowd, raising their shrill voices to encourage the young and vigorous to exert themselves in repelling the foe. If any enemy really appeared, they had immediately fled on being discovered; a thing not at all unlikely, as it is conformable to their customs, and in this instance the more probable, as the Sioux would naturally expect that our party would join their adversaries. At all events, the party soon returned in as much disorder as they went out. I observed, that amongst the warriors of this and the other nations, several had foxes' tails attached to the heels of their mockasons, and I am informed by Captain Winter, who resided some time at Michillimakinac, that the same custom prevails among the tribes in Upper Canada, and that this honour is only permitted to such warriors as have killed an enemy on his own ground.

16th.-I went into the village, and found that the chiefs were assembled to hear from the warriors an account of what had passed the preceding day. As they were not *in the habit of printing newspapers*, the news was carried through the village by heralds, who attend at the door of the council-lodge, and from time to time go through the village to give information. On my return to the camp, I found that Mr. Hunt and Mr. Lisa were negociating respecting the boats belonging to our party, [130] which were no longer of any use to us. Mr. Hunt was willing to exchange them with Mr. Lisa for horses, who had a considerable number of them at the Fort belonging to the Missouri Fur Company, about two hundred miles higher up the river. Mr. Hunt, some days previous to this, presented to me the smallest boat, which was a barge built at Michillimakinac; and three American hunters, whom we found at the Aricara nation, agreed to assist me in navigating it down the river, when I should be disposed to return. The three other boats, and some Indian goods, were finally exchanged with Mr. Lisa. In consequence of this arrangement, I found that a party were to be dispatched in a few days to the Fort for the horses, and I resolved to accompany them, if permitted. After an excursion to collect plants, I walked into the village in the evening, and found that a party had arrived, who had been on an expedition to steal horses, in which they were successful. This event, and the return of the war party, caused an unusual bustle: the tops of the lodges were crowded with men, women, and children. Several of the old men harangued them in a loud voice. The subject I understood to be an exhortation to behave well towards the white people, and stating the advantages they derived by an intercourse with them. Notwithstanding all this tumult, some of the women continued their employment in dressing [131] buffaloe skins, which are stretched on frames, and placed on stages, erected both for this purpose, and to dry or jerk the flesh of animals cut into thin slices.

17th.-It was arranged that Mr. Crooks should go to the Company's Fort for the horses; and as more than thirty had been bought from the Aricaras, the men who were to accompany him began to select from amongst them such as they thought the best able to perform the journey. Notwithstanding I had resolved to accompany them, I neglected taking the same precaution, which occasioned me afterwards much vexation. I had already expressed my wish to undertake the journey, and although Mr. Hunt had not absolutely refused to permit me, yet he tried by arguments to dissuade me from it, in representing the danger which the party ran of being cut off by the Sioux, the fatigue of riding on an Indian saddle, &c. I therefore did not for the present press the subject, and spoke of it only to Mr. Crooks, who, knowing my determination, was much pleased with it. After devoting the greatest part of the day to the increasing of my collection, I went into the village, and found that some Indians had arrived from the Chayenne nation, where they had been sent to inform the Aricaras of their intention to visit them in fifteen days. One of these Indians was covered with a buffalo [132] robe, curiously ornamented with figures worked with split quills, stained red and yellow, intermixed with much taste, and the border of the robe entirely hung round with the hoofs of young fawns, which at every movement made a noise much resembling that of the rattlesnake when that animal is irritated. I understood that this robe had been purchased from the Arapahoes, or Big Bead Indians, a remote tribe, who frequent the Rocky Mountains. I wished much to purchase the robe, and offered him such articles in exchange as I thought most likely to induce him to part with it; but he refused. The day following it was purchased by Mr. M'Clellan, who gave it to me for silver ornaments and other articles, which amounted to about ten dollars. As these Indians could not speak the Aricara language, they had need of an interpreter, whose place was supplied by one of the Aricaras that could speak their language. They were tall and well proportioned men, but of a darker complexion than the Aricaras. This nation has no fixed place of residence, but resort chiefly about the Black Hills, near the head of Chayenne River, having been driven by the Sioux from their former place of residence, near the Red River of Lake Winnipic. Their number is now inconsiderable, as they scarcely muster one hundred warriors. On my return to the camp, I found it crowded with Indians and squaws, as it had been for the two preceding evenings. [133] Travellers who have been acquainted with savages, have remarked that they are either very liberal of their women to strangers, or extremely jealous. In this species of liberality no nation can exceed the Aricaras, who

flocked down every evening with their wives, sisters, and daughters, anxious to meet with a market for them. The Canadians were very good customers, and Mr. Hunt was kept in full employ during the evening, in delivering out to them blue beads and vermillion, the articles in use for this kind of traffic. This evening I judged that there were not fewer than eighty squaws, and I observed several instances wherein the squaw was consulted by her husband as to the *quantum sufficit* of price; a mark of consideration which, from some knowledge of Indians, and the estimation in which their women are held, I had not expected.

18th.- Went early to the bluffs to the south-westward of the town, on one of which I observed fourteen buffalo skulls placed in a row. The cavities of the eyes and the nostrils were filled with a species of *artemisia* common on the prairies, which appears to be a nondescript. On my return, I told our interpreter to inquire into the reason of this, and learned that it was an honour conferred by the Indians on the buffaloes which they had killed, in order to appease their spirits, and prevent [134] them from apprising the living buffaloes of the danger they run in approaching the neighbourhood. After my return, I walked into the village with Mr. Donald M'Kenzie, who wore a green surtout. This attracted very much the attention of the squaws, and from the surprise they shewed, I believe it is a colour with which they were unacquainted. They were so anxious to obtain a part of it, that several offered him *favours* as an equivalent for a piece which they marked out. This occasioned much mirth betwixt us, and on my part a pretended alarm lest his coat should become a *spencer*. We amused ourselves sometime by watching a party who were engaged in play. A place was neatly formed, resembling a skittle alley, about nine feet in breadth and ninety feet long: a ring of wood, about five inches in diameter, was trundled along from one end, and when it had run some distance, two Indians, who stood ready, threw after it, in a sliding manner, each a piece of wood, about three feet long and four inches in breadth, made smooth on one edge, and kept from turning by a cross piece passing through it, and bent backwards so as to resemble a cross bow. The standers by kept an account of the game, and he whose piece, in a given number of throws, more frequently came nearest the ring after it had fallen, won the game.

[135] 19th.- We breakfasted early, having killed the dogs the night before, and ten horses were brought into the camp for the party appointed to go to the Fort, beyond the Mandans, to escort the horses agreed for with Mr. Lisa, and I now declared to Mr. Hunt that, unless he absolutely refused me the privilege, I was determined to accompany them. With his accustomed kindness he consented, and a man was dispatched to catch a horse for me on the prairie. As the party had cast their bullets, and made every other preparation the preceding night, we were all ready, when the man returned with a very bad horse. He was small, and apparently weak; but being unwilling to delay the party, I fixed my saddle, and we set out, having previously agreed with one of the men to take care of my plants in my absence. We had for our guide a person of the name of Jones, who was acquainted with the whole of the country betwixt the Mandans and Aricaras; and after passing the villages, kept as much as possible in the ravines and valleys, to avoid being seen by the Sioux Indians, who we had reason to think were still lurking about the country; as we knew that if they discovered us, they would, almost to a certainty, cut us off. There being no provisions to spare in the camp, except a little dog's flesh, we took nothing with us to eat, nor made the least attempt to look for game, as our safety perhaps depended on the celerity and [136] silence of our march. We continued at a smart trot until near eight o'clock in the evening, having only stopped once to give the horses an opportunity to feed. Our course lay nearly north, and we kept the river in sight the whole of the day, being sometimes very near it, and at other times five or six miles distant. We encamped on the border of a creek, not more than a mile from the Missouri, on the open prairie. We found this place so much infested with mosquitoes, that scarcely any of us slept. In the latter part of the day I discovered the insufficiency of my horse, as it was with difficulty I could keep up with the rest. The reflections on my situation, combined with the pain occasioned by mosquitoes, kept me from closing my eyes; in addition to this, I had already painfully experienced the effects of an Indian saddle, which I shall describe. It consists of six pieces

of wood: two of these are strong forked sticks, one of which is formed to fix on the shoulders of the horse; the other is adapted to the lower part of the back: they are connected by four flat pieces, each about four inches in breadth: two of these are so placed as to lie on each side of the backbone of the horse, which rises above them; the two others are fastened to the extremities of the forked sticks, and the whole is firmly tied by thongs. Two strong slips of buffalo hide are doubled over each of the upper connecting pieces, for the purpose of holding [137] the stirrup, which is formed of a stick about two feet long, and cut half way through in two places, so as to divide it into three equal parts: at these places it is bent, and when the two ends are strongly tied, it forms an equilateral triangle. The conjunct end of the foremost forked stick rises to the height of eight or ten inches above the back of the horse, and serves to fasten on it the coiled end of the long slip of dried skin intended to serve as a bridle: this slip is also made use of to fasten the horse at night, to allow him sufficient space wherein to graze, and is mostly fifty or sixty feet long. Under the saddle is laid a square piece of buffalo skin, dressed with the hair upon it, and doubled four-fold, and on the saddle the rider fixes his blanket.

20th. - We were on horseback on the first appearance of day, and immediately abandoned the river, passed over the bluffs, and struck into the interior of the country. Besides my rifle and other equipments, similar to those of the rest of the party, I had a portfolio for securing specimens of plants. I had contrived already to collect some interesting specimens, by frequently alighting to pluck them, and put them into my hat. For these opportunities, and to ease my horse, I ran many miles alongside of him. Notwithstanding this, about noon he seemed inclined to give up, and I proposed to Mr. [138] Crooks that I should turn back: this he would by no means agree to, but prevailed on the lightest man in company to exchange horses with me for the rest of the day. Soon after noon, we observed some deer grazing at a distance; we therefore halted in a small valley, suffered the horses to graze, and dispatched one of the men to look after the deer, who soon returned, having killed one. As we had not eaten any thing from the morning of the preceding day, this news was very acceptable, and some were sent to fetch the meat, whilst others gathered dry buffaloe dung to boil our kettle. This opportunity afforded me the pleasure of adding to my little collection, besides securing in my portfolio what I had before gathered. It is perhaps needless to observe that the men were not slow in bringing the meat, nor that we were equally expeditious in our cooking. We were so confident of finding game, that we did not take any part of the remains of our feast, but proceeded, in the hope of being able to reach Cannon-ball River[29], intending to encamp on its banks. In the course of the afternoon we perceived innumerable herds of buffaloe; and had we wished to hunt, we might have killed [139] great numbers; but we avoided them as much as possible, for fear of disturbing them, as it might have been the means of enabling some lurking war party to discover us. It is well known to the hunters and the Indians, that a herd of buffaloe, when frightened, will often run ten, fifteen, or even twenty miles before they stop. About five o'clock we perceived before us the valley of Cannon-ball River, bounded on each side by a range of small hills, visible as far as the eye can reach; and as they appear to diminish regularly, in the proportion of their distance, they produce a singular and pleasing effect. In the evening, as we considered the danger from the Sioux much decreased, we ventured to kill a buffalo: each man cut what he thought proper, and the remainder was left for the wolves, who doubtless picked the bones before the morning. On descending into the valley of the river, some deer were observed, feeding near the bank, whilst others were lying down near them. Some of our men stole cautiously round a grove, and shot two of the poor animals, although we had no great occasion for them. The Cannon-ball River was muddy at this time; but whether it is constantly so or not, I could not learn. It is here about one hundred and sixty yards wide, but so shallow that we crossed it without swimming, but not without wetting some of the blankets on our saddles. We encamped on a very fine prairie, near [140] the river, affording grass in abundance, nearly a yard high, in which we stationed our horses. The alluvion of the river is about a mile in breadth from bluff to bluff, and is very beautiful, being prairie, interspersed with groves of trees, and ornamented with beautiful plants, now in flower. Amongst others which I did not observe before, I found a species of flax, resembling that which is cultivated: I think it is the species known as *linum perenne*.

I rambled until it was quite dark, and found my way to the camp by observing the fire.

21st.- We arose before day. Each man cooked his own breakfast, cutting what suited him from the venison, and fixing it on a stick set in the ground, which inclined over the fire. At break of day we were on horseback, and soon after ascended the bluffs, and proceeded on our route. I noticed a sensible change in the face of the country after we had left the river. We now found some of the more elevated places covered with small stones, and divested of herbage, and throughout the soil was of less depth, and the grass shorter and more scanty. About ten o'clock we again found the country to assume the same fertile appearance as on the preceding day, and saw herds of buffaloe in every direction: before mid-day two were killed, but very little was taken, except the marrow-bones: each man who chose to take one, hung it to his [141] saddle. In the course of this forenoon we observed three rattlesnakes, of an entirely new and undescribed species: one of them I killed, and carried in my shot-pouch, and during the time we stopped to feed our horses, I secured the skin. We passed very close to several herds of buffaloe during the afternoon, near which we always observed a number of wolves lurking. I perceived that those herds which had wolves in their vicinity, were almost wholly females with their calves; but noticed also, that there were a few bulls with them, and that these were always stationed on the outside of the herd, inclosing the cows with their calves within. We came suddenly on one of these herds, containing, as we judged, from six to eight hundred buffaloes: they immediately galloped off. One of our party rode after them, and overtook a calf which could not keep pace with the rest: he instantly dismounted, caught it by the hind leg, and plunged his knife into its body. We took what we wanted, and rode on. This afternoon I noticed a singularly formed hill on our right, in the direction of the Missouri, apparently about ten miles from us. It is of an oblong shape, nearly perpendicular at the ends, and level at the top, so as to resemble a regular building: near the centre there rises a pic, very steep, which seems to be elevated at least one hundred feet above the hill on which it stands. We rode this day almost without intermission, and [142] late in the evening arrived at *Riviere de Coeur*, or Heart River, and encamped on its banks, or, more properly, lay down in our blankets. I found that my horse did not get worse, although he showed a great disposition to lag behind; a certain proof of his being very much tired, as the Indian horses, when on a journey, have an aversion to be separated from their companions.

22nd.- Although the distance from this place to the Missouri Fur Company's Fort was estimated at about sixty miles, we determined if possible to reach it this day, and were, as usual, on horseback at day-break, having previously breakfasted on veal. I observed the preceding days a sufficient number of buffaloes to induce me to credit the hunters in their reports of the vast numbers they had seen; but this day afforded me ample confirmation. Scarcely had we ascended the bluffs of Heart River, when we discerned herds in every direction; and had we been disposed to devote the day to hunting, we might have killed a great number, as the country north of Heart River is not so uniform in its surface as that we had passed. It consists of ridges, of small elevation, separated by narrow valleys. This renders it much more favourable for hunting, and although we did not materially deviate from our course, five were killed before noon. Mr. Crooks joined me in remonstrating against this [143] waste; but it is impossible to restrain the hunters, as they scarcely ever lose an opportunity of killing, if it offers, even although not in want of food. About two o'clock we arrived on the summit of a ridge more elevated than any we had yet passed. From thence we saw before us a beautiful plain, as we judged, about four miles across, in the direction of our course, and of similar dimension from east to west. It was bounded on all sides by long ridges, similar to that which we had ascended. The scene exhibited in this valley was sufficiently interesting to excite even in our Canadians a wish to stop a few minutes and contemplate it. The whole of the plain was perfectly level, and, like the rest of the country, without a single shrub. It was covered with the finest verdure, and in every part herds of buffaloe were feeding. I counted seventeen herds; but the aggregate number of the animals it was difficult even to guess at: some thought upwards of ten thousand. We descended into the plain, and each having two marrow bones hung to his saddle, we resolved to dine wherever we could first find water. In descending into the plain, we came

upon a small herd feeding in a valley. One buffalo was shot by our party before we could possibly restrain them. At about half the distance across the plain we reached a small pond, where we halted, and having collected a sufficient quantity of dry buffaloe's dung, we made a fire, in which we disposed [144] our bones, and although the water was stagnant, we made free use of it. During our stay here a very large herd of buffaloe continued to feed within a quarter of a mile of us. Some of them I observed gazing at us; but as they were to the windward, they had not the power of discovering what we were by the sense of smelling. I found, on inquiry from some of our party who were well acquainted with the habits of these animals, that they seem to rely chiefly on that sense for their safety. Around this herd we counted fifteen wolves, several of which stood for some minutes looking at us, without exhibiting any signs of fear: and as we did not think them worth shooting, we left them unmolested. On gaining the summit of the ridge forming the northern boundary of the plain, we noticed a chain of hills on our right hand, at the distance of about six miles. Jones, our guide, assured us they were the bluffs of the Missouri, and although we might not arrive at the Fort that night, yet he was certain of our being able to go to the Mandan village. About four o'clock we fell into a trace that Jones said was one of the roads which the Mandans usually followed when they went out to hunt. We resolved to keep along it, as we found it led towards the bluffs, at which we arrived in about an hour, and passed through a narrow valley, bounded on each side by some small rocks of secondary limestone. On [145] turning an angle in the valley, we came suddenly in view of the Missouri, at no great distance from us. The sight of the river caused much joy in our party; but no one had so much occasion as myself to be pleased with it, as it was with the greatest difficulty I could keep up with the party, my horse being so tired, that Dorion and others of the party occasionally rode after me, to beat him forward. The trace turned up a long and very fine plain, betwixt the bluffs and the river. The plain continued to increase in breadth as we advanced, and had on it a sufficiency of clumps of cotton woods, so interspersed as to prevent our seeing its upper termination. We had not been on this plain more than half an hour, when we suddenly saw an Indian on horseback, galloping down the bluffs at full speed, and in a few minutes he was out of sight, having proceeded nearly in the same direction we were pursuing. We considered this as a certain proof that we were not far from the Mandan town, and shortly after, on turning round the point of a large grove, we came in full view of it. We could perceive that the Indian had already given notice of our approach, as the tops of the lodges were crowded with people; and as we advanced, we saw crowds coming from the town to meet us. From the time the first of the Indians met us till we arrived in the town, we were continually employed in shaking hands, as every one was eager to [146] perform that ceremony with the whole party, and several made us understand that they had seen us before, having been of the war party which we had met at the Great Bend. They conducted us to the lodge of She-he-kè, the chief, where we alighted. He met us at the door, and after shaking hands with us, said, to my great surprise in English, "Come in house." I was again surprised, on entering the lodge, to see a fine dunghill cock. On inquiry I found that She-he-kè had brought it with him from the United States, at the time he accompanied Messrs. Lewis and Clarke, where also he learnt his English." It appeared that immediately on the centinel announcing our approach, the squaw had *set on the pot*. The victuals being ready before we had done smoking, and Mr. Crooks expressing a determination to proceed to the Missouri Fur Company's Fort this evening, we soon finished our meal, which consisted of jerked flesh of buffaloe and pounded corn. The sun was setting when we mounted, and several of our horses appeared much jaded, but mine in particular. I therefore proposed to remain at the Mandans; but the party, and in particular Mr. Crooks, wished me to go on. With some reluctance I consented, and we pushed on our horses, in order to reach Knife River before it was quite dark, which by much exertion we effected, and arrived opposite to the third village of the Minetaree, or Gros Ventres [147] Indians, as the night was closing in. On hallooing, some Indians came down to the bank on the other side of the river, and immediately ran back to the village. In a few minutes we saw them returning along with six squaws, each of whom had a skin canoe on her back, and a paddle in her hand. Whilst we unsaddled our horses they crossed the river in their canoes, and the Indians swam over, and all shook hands with us. The squaws put our saddles in their canoes, -where we also placed ourselves, and left the

Indians to drive our horses over the river, which they managed with much address, by placing themselves in such a way as to keep them in a compact body. This river is not rapid, but it has the appearance of being deep, and is about eighty yards wide at this place. After saddling our horses, and giving the squaws three balls and three loads of powder for each man, being the price of ferriage, we passed through the village, having seven miles still to travel in order to reach the Fort. We could not now make our horses exceed a walk. On the hill above the town I imperfectly distinguished something that had the appearance of cavalry, which Jones told me were the stages whereon the Indians deposit the bodies of their dead. About eleven o'clock we reached the Fort, after having travelled this day more than eighteen hours, with very little intermission. We were received in a very friendly manner by Mr. [148] Reuben Lewis, brother to Captain Lewis, who travelled to the Pacific Ocean: the mosquitoes were much less friendly, and were in such numbers, and so troublesome, that notwithstanding our excessive fatigue, it was next to impossible to sleep.

23rd.-We went early to look at the horses. The greater part were lying down, and appeared to have scarcely moved from the place where they had been left the preceding night, seeming to prefer rest to food. In consequence of their jaded state, Mr. Crooks resolved to remain at the Fort four or five days, that they might recruit themselves. On our return to breakfast, we found that the Fort was but ill supplied with provisions, having little of any thing but jerked meat; but as that, or any other accommodation the place afforded, was accompanied by kindness and the most polite attention from Mr. Lewis, we were much pleased with our reception. The bluffs here have a very romantic appearance, and I was preparing to examine them after breakfast, when some squaws came in belonging to the uppermost village of the Minetarees, with a quantity of roots to sell. Being informed that they were dug on the prairie, my curiosity was excited, and on tasting found them very palatable, even in a raw state. They were of the shape of an egg: some of them were nearly as large as those of a goose; others were smaller. Mr. Lewis [149] obligingly caused a few to be boiled. Their taste most resembled that of a parsnip, but I thought them much better. I found no vestige of the plant attached to them, and anxious to ascertain the species, I succeeded in obtaining information from the squaws of the route by which they came to the Fort, and immediately set out on the search. After much pains I found one of the places where they had dug the plants, and to my surprise discovered, from the tops broken off, that the plant was one I was well acquainted with, having found it even in the vicinity of St. Louis, where I had first discovered it, and determined it to be a new species of *psoralea*, which is now known as *psoralea esculenta*. On enquiry I was informed that this root is of the greatest importance, not only to the Indians, but to the hunters, who, in case of the failure of other food, from the want of success in hunting, can always support life by resorting to it; and even when not impelled by want, it cannot but be extremely grateful to those who otherwise must exist on animal food alone, without bread or salt; at least I then thought it so. I found the country about the Fort, and especially the bluffs, extremely interesting. It chiefly consists of argillaceous schistus, and a very tenacious and indurated yellow clay, exhibiting in many places the appearance of coal. The land floods from the country behind the bluffs had cut through them, and left large [150] bodies of clay standing up, with the sides perpendicular, and resembling in appearance towers, or large square buildings, which it was impossible to ascend. The incumbent soil appears to be of excellent quality, and was at this time covered with fine grass and a number of beautiful plants. The roots and specimens of these I collected with the greatest assiduity, not having yet determined to remain any longer than until our party returned. I soon found the number to increase so much, as I lengthened my excursions, that I resolved to remain at the Fort until Mr. Lisa came up with his boat, and obtain a passage with him down to the Aricaras, and this resolution I announced to Mr. Crooks. The Missouri had overflowed its banks some time before our arrival, and on receding had left numberless pools in the alluvion. In these the mosquitoes had been generated in numbers inconceivably great. In walking it was necessary to have one hand constantly employed to keep them out of the eyes; and although a person killed hundreds, thousands were ready to take their place. At evening the horses collected in a body round the Fort, waiting until fires were made, to produce smoke, in which they might stand for protection. This was regularly done, and a quantity

of green weeds thrown on each fire to increase the smoke. These fires caused much quarrelling and fighting, each horse contending for the centre of the smoke, [151] and the place nearest the fire. In the afternoon we were visited by She-he-kè, the Mandan chief, who came dressed in a suit of clothes brought with him from the United States. He informed us that he had a great wish to go [to] live with the whites, and that several of his people, induced by the representations he had made of the White people's mode of living, had the same intentions. We were able to converse with She-he-kè through the medium of Jussum, the interpreter for the Fort, who was a Frenchman, and had married a squaw belonging to the second village of the Minetarees, or Gros Ventres Indians. As I expressed a wish to visit the villages, I spoke to Jussum on that subject, who readily consented to accompany me, but informed me that in a day or two there would be a dance of the squaws, to celebrate the exploits of their husbands, when it was agreed we should go. The Fort consisted of a square block-house, the lower part of which was a room for furs: the upper part was inhabited by Mr. Lewis and some of the hunters belonging to the establishment. There were some small outhouses, and the whole was surrounded by a pallisado, or piquet, about fifteen feet high. I found attached to it a very pretty garden, in which were peas, beans, sallad, radishes, and other vegetables, under the care of a gardener, an Irishman, who shewed it to me with much self-importance. I praised his management, but expressed [152] my regret that he had no potatoes. "Oh!" said he, "that does not signify; we can soon have them; there is plenty just over the way." I did not think the man was serious; but on mentioning the circumstance to Mr. Lewis, he told me that there really were potatoes at an English Fort on the river St. Peter's, distant *only* from two to three hundred miles.

24th.- This morning I was informed by Jussum that the squaw dance would be performed in the afternoon, and he promised to have horses ready for us by mid-day. I packed up a few beads for presents, and spent the fore part of the day in my usual way, but took a more extended range into the interior from the river, as the air was calm, having discovered that the mosquitoes remain almost entirely in the valley of the river, where during calm weather it was nearly impossible to collect. On the top of a hill, about four miles from the Fort, I had a fine view of a beautiful valley, caused by a rivulet, being a branch of Knife River, the declivities of which abound in a new species of *eleagnus*, intermixed with a singular procumbent species of cedar (*juniperus*.) The branches are entirely prostrate on the ground, and never rise above the height of a few inches. The beautiful silvery hue of the first, contrasted with the dark green of the latter, had a most pleasing [153] effect; and to render the scene more interesting, the small alluvion of the rivulet was so plentifully covered with a species of lily, (*lilium catesbaei*) as to make it resemble a scarlet stripe as far as the eye could trace it. I returned to the Fort much gratified, and prepared to accompany Jussum to the dance. On our approach some fields of Indian corn lay betwixt us and the village, which I wished to avoid, and proposed that we should change our route, as the corn was now nearly a yard high.[30] This proposal was absolutely refused by Jussum, and we rode on through the corn till we came to where some squaws were at work, who called out to us to make us change our route, but were soon silenced by Jussum. I suspected that he committed [154] this aggression to show his authority or importance. On our arrival at the village we went into several of the lodges, which were constructed exactly in the same form as those of the Aricaras. We smoked at every lodge, and I found by the bustle among the women that they were preparing for the dance, as some of them were putting on their husbands' clothes, for which purpose they did not retire into a corner, nor seem in the least discomposed by our presence. In about half an hour the dance began, which was performed in a circle, the dancers moving round, with tomahawks in their hands. At intervals they turned their faces all at once towards the middle of the circle, and brandished their weapons. After some time one of them stepped into the centre of the ring, and made an harangue, frequently brandishing her weapon, whilst the rest moved round her. I found that the nature of all the speeches was the same, which was to boast of the actions of their husbands. One which made Jussum smile I requested he would interpret. He briefly informed me, that she had said her husband had travelled south-west to a country inhabited by white people, which journey took him twenty days to perform: that he

went to steal horses, and when he came to the white people's houses, he found one where the men were gone out, and in which he killed two women, and stole from them a number of horses. She corrected [155] herself, by denying that they were women whom her husband had killed, and the reasons she assigned to prove they were not, was what caused Jussum to smile. The dance did not last more than an hour, and I was informed by Jussum that it would be followed by a feast of dog's flesh, of which it was expected I should partake. I excused myself by saying I wished to collect some plants, and set out alone. In my way to the Fort I passed through a small wood, where I discovered a stage constructed betwixt four trees, standing very near each other, and to which the stage was attached, about ten feet from the ground. On this stage was laid the body of an Indian, wrapt in a buffalo robe. As the stage was very narrow, I could see all that was upon it without much trouble. It was the body of a man, and beside it there lay a bow and quiver with arrows, a tomahawk, and a scalping knife. There were a great number of stages erected about a quarter of a mile from the village, on which the dead bodies were deposited, which, for fear of giving offence, I avoided; as I found, that although it is the custom of these people thus to expose the dead bodies of their ancestors, yet they have in a very high degree that veneration for their remains which is a characteristic of the American Indians. I arrived at the Fort about sunset. Soon afterwards we heard the report of a swivel down the river, which caused us all to run [156] out, and soon saw the boat belonging to Mr. Lisa turning a point about two miles below us. We returned the salute, but he did not arrive that night, as the side on which we were, to within half a mile of the Fort, consisted of high perpendicular bluffs, and his men were too much exhausted to reach us by the river.

25th.- This morning I had the pleasure of again meeting Mr. Brackenridge, and of finding that it was the intention of Mr. Lisa to stay at least a fortnight at the Fort. I was very glad to have so good an opportunity of examining this interesting country. I received by the hands of Mr. Brackenridge some small articles for trade, which I had delivered to him at the Aricaras. This enabled me to reward the gardener for his civility in offering me a place in the garden where I could deposit my living plants, and of this I availed myself during my stay.

27th.- The business relative to the horses having been arranged betwixt Mr. Lisa and Mr. Crooks, he set out early this morning on his return to the Aricara nation; and as he was not without his fears that the Gros Ventres Indians, headed by Le Borgne, or One Eyed, would attempt to rob him of his horses, he determined to proceed with as much celerity as we had travelled to the Fort, [157] and kept his departure as secret as possible. I was much pleased to see this chief at the Fort in a few hours afterwards, being satisfied that Mr. Crooks was now out of his reach. As it may give some idea of the tyrannic sway with which the chiefs sometimes govern these children of nature, I shall relate an instance of cruelty and oppression practised by this villain. He had a wish to possess the wife of a young warrior of his tribe, who was esteemed beautiful. She resisted his offers, and avoided him. He took the opportunity of the absence of her husband, and carried her off forcibly. The husband was informed on his return of the transaction, and went to the lodge of Le Borgne to claim his wife. The monster killed him. The young man had no father: his mother only was living, and he was her only son. The shock deprived her of reason, and she reviles the wretch whenever she meets him, and often seeks him to procure the opportunity of doing so. Even amongst those we term savages, the horror which the deed has occasioned is so great, and the pity which the situation of the poor maniac has excited so prevailing, that he dares not kill her. How much then ought Christians to detest a similar deed. He has a most savage and ferocious aspect, and is of large stature. He is chief of one of the villages of the Minetarees, or, as the French call them, Gros Ventres, and assumes a dominion over both, although [158] there are several other chiefs. It is stated by Mr. Lewis that the two villages or bands can raise six hundred warriors, but the number at this time is probably much less. The object of this wretch in visiting the Fort was to make professions of friendship, and to obtain a present. Mr. Lisa knew very well the value of his professions, but, notwithstanding, he gave him some, with which he appeared satisfied. Having selected some silver ornaments which I purposed, presenting to She-he-kè, Mr.

Brackenridge agreed to accompany me to the Mandan village. We obtained horses from Mr. Lewis for the journey, and about ten o'clock set off. We crossed Knife River at the lower of the Minetaree villages, and paid the accustomed price to the squaw who ferried us over; which was, for each of us, three balls and three charges of powder. Before we left the village, we were invited into the lodge belonging to the *White Wolf*, one of the chiefs of this village, with whom we smoked. I was surprised to observe that his squaw and one of his children had brown hair, although their skins did not appear to be lighter coloured than the rest of the tribe. As the woman appeared to be above forty years of age, it is almost certain that no intercourse had taken place betwixt these people and the whites at the time she was born. I should have been less [159] surprised at the circumstance had they been one of those tribes who change their places of residence; but they have not even a tradition of having resided in any other place than where the present village stands. The *White Wolf* appeared to be much pleased with our visit, and by signs invited us to call at his lodge whenever we came that way. He shook hands very cordially with us at parting. In our way to the Mandans we passed through the small village belonging to the Ahwahhaways, consisting of not more than eighteen or twenty lodges. This nation can scarcely muster fifty warriors, and yet they carry on an offensive war against the Snake and Flathead Indians. On our arrival at the Mandans, She-he-kè, as before, came to the door of his lodge, and said, "come in house." We had scarcely entered when he looked earnestly at us, and said, "whiskey." In this we could not gratify him, as we had not thought of bringing any. I presented the silver ornaments to him, with which he seemed much pleased, and after smoking we were feasted with a dish consisting of jerked buffalo meat, corn, and beans boiled together. I mentioned to him my wish to purchase some mockasons, and he sent out into the village to inform the squaws, who flocked into the lodge in such numbers, and with so plentiful a supply, that I could not buy a tenth part of them. I furnished myself with a dozen pair at a cheap rate, for which I gave a little vermillion, [160] or rather red lead, and a few strings of blue beads. During our stay, She-he-kè pointed to a little boy in the lodge, whom we had not before noticed, and gave us to understand that his father was one of the party that accompanied Mr. Lewis, and also indicated the individual. On our return we crossed Knife River at the upper village of the Minetarees. The old squaw who brought the canoe to the opposite side of the river, to fetch us over, was accompanied by three young squaws, apparently about fourteen or fifteen years of age, who came over in the canoe, and were followed by an Indian, who swam over to take care of our horses. When our saddles were taken off, and put into the canoe, Mr. Brackenridge and myself stepped in, and were followed by the old squaw, when the three young ones instantly stripped, threw their clothes into the canoe, and jumped into the river. We had scarcely embarked before they began to practice on us a number of mischievous tricks. The slow progress which the canoe made enabled them to swim round us frequently, sometimes splashing us, then seizing hold of the old squaw's paddle, who tried in vain to strike them with it; at other times they would pull the canoe in such a manner as to change the direction of its course; at length they all seized hold of the hind part, and hung to it. The old squaw called out to the Indian that was following our horses, who immediately swam down to our [161] assistance, and soon relieved us from our frolicksome tormentors, by plunging them successively over head, and holding them for a considerable time under water. After some time they all made their escape from him, by diving and swimming in different directions. On landing, by way of retaliation, we seized their clothes, which caused much laughing betwixt the squaw and the Indian. We had many invitations to stay and smoke; but as it was near sunset, and we had seven miles to ride, they excused us.

29th and 30th.- I continued adding to my stock, and the latter day observed a vein of fine coal, about eighteen inches thick, in the perpendicular bluff below the Fort. On shewing specimens of it to some of the hunters in the Fort, they assured me that higher up the river it was a very common substance, and that there were places in which it was on fire. As pumice is often found floating down the Missouri, I made frequent inquiries of the hunters if any volcano existed on the river or its branches, but could not procure from them any information that would warrant such a conclusion. It is probable, therefore, that this pumice stone proceeds from these burning coal beds.

1st July.- I extended my researches up the river, along, the foot of the bluffs; and when at [162] the distance of three or four miles from the Fort, and in the act of digging up some roots, I was surprised by an Indian, who was within a few yards of me before I perceived him. He had a short gun on his shoulder, and came close to me. He shewed me by signs that he knew very well I was collecting those roots and plants for medicine, and laying hold of my shirt, made the motion usual when traffic or exchange is proposed. It consists in crossing the two fore fingers one over the other alternately. On his pointing to a little distance from us, I perceived a squaw coming up, followed by two dogs, each of which drew a sledge, containing some mockasons and other small articles. The signs which he afterwards made were of a nature not to be misunderstood, and implied a wish to make a certain exchange for my shirt, wherein the squaw would have been the temporary object of barter. To this proposition I did not accede, but replied, in the Osage language, *honkoska* (no) which he seemed to understand, and immediately took hold of my belt, which was of scarlet worsted, worked with blue and white beads, and repeated his proposition, but with the same success. After looking at me fiercely for a few moments, he took his gun from his shoulder, and said in French, *sacre crapaud*, which was also repeated by the squaw. As I had foreseen that he would be offended at my refusal, I took care, on the first movement [163] which he made with his gun, to be beforehand with him, by placing my hand on the lock of mine, which I held presented to him. In this situation we gradually withdrew from each other, until he disappeared with his squaw and the dogs.

2nd.-Mr. Brackenridge and I made an excursion into the interior from the river, and found nothing interesting but what has already been noticed, excepting some bodies of argillaceous schist, parts of which had a columnar appearance. They were lying in a horizontal position, and resembled in some degree the bodies of trees.

4th.- This day being the anniversary of the independence of the United States, Mr. Lisa invited us to dine on board of his boat, which was accepted by Messrs. Brackenridge, Lewis, Nuttall, and myself; and as Le Borgne and the Black Shoe, the two Minetaree chiefs, called at the Fort before dinner, they were invited also. They ate with moderation, and behaved with much propriety, seeming studiously to imitate the manners of white people. After dinner Mr. Lisa gave to each of them a glass of whiskey, which they drank without any hesitation; but on having swallowed it, they laid their hands on their stomachs, and exhibited such distortion of features, as to render it impossible to forbear laughing. As Jussum was present, I asked [164] him the meaning of some words which they spoke to each other, who informed me that they called the whiskey fire water.

Mr. Lisa having announced to us his intention to depart on the 6th for the Aricaras, I employed myself during the 5th in packing up carefully my collection, and on the morning of the 6th we set out. Our progress down the river was very rapid, as it was still in a high state. We did not land until evening, after making in the course of the day more than one hundred miles. In the evening and during the night the mosquitoes were exceedingly troublesome, which rendered it almost impossible to sleep.

7th.- We passed Cannon-ball River about ten o'clock, and stopped a short time at its mouth, where I noticed and procured some additional specimens. In the evening I had the pleasure of meeting my former companions, and was rejoiced to find that Mr. Crooks arrived safely with the horses, and that Mr. Hunt had now obtained nearly eighty in all. Soon after my arrival, Mr. Hunt informed me of his intention to depart from the Aricaras shortly. I therefore purposed returning down the river; and as the Canadians would not be permitted to take their trunks, or, as they termed them, their *caisettes*, by land, I purchased [165] from them seventeen, in which I intended to arrange my living specimens, having now collected several thousands. It had been a custom with us to keep a guard round our camp during the night, since our arrival at the Aricaras. Four of the party were stationed for this purpose until midnight, and were then relieved by four others, who remained on guard until morning. On the morning of the 10th, at day-break, some Indians came to our camp from the village, among whom was my friend the young warrior. As I happened to be on guard, he came to me, and by signs invited me to go and breakfast with him. Whilst we were

sitting together, he suddenly jumped up, and pointed to the bluffs, at the distance of three or four miles down the river. On looking, I observed a numerous crowd of Indians. He gave me to understand that it was a war party on their return, and immediately ran to the village. In a few minutes the tops of the lodges were crowded with Indians, who appeared much agitated. Soon after an Indian galloped past our camp, who I understood was a chief. In a few minutes afterwards parties began to come out of the village, on their way to meet the warriors, or rather to join them, as it is the custom for a war party to wait at a distance from the village, when a victory has been gained, that their friends may join in the parade of a triumphal entry; and on such occasions all their [166] finery and decorations are displayed: some time also is requisite to enable the warriors at home and their friends to paint themselves, so as to appear with proper *eclat*. During the time that elapsed before the arrival of the procession, I walked into the village, where a universal stillness prevailed. No business seemed to be going on, excepting the preparing of something for the warriors to eat on their return. The squaws were thus employed in all the lodges into which I entered[31], and I noticed that not one of the poor creatures seemed in the least solicitous about her own person; as they are [167] too insignificant to be thought an appendage to a triumph. It was near the middle of the day before the procession came in sight, when I went to meet it, in order that my view might be prolonged. A number of the old men and squaws were also moving down from the town to meet it. At the head of the procession were four standard bearers, followed by a band of warriors on foot; after which came a party on horseback: to these succeeded two of the principal chiefs, betwixt whom was a young warrior, who I understood had been severely wounded. Then came two other standard bearers, who were succeeded by another band of foot and horse; this order was observed until the four bands of which the party consisted had passed. They were about three hundred in number: each man carried a shield; a few were armed with guns, some with bows,[32] and others with war clubs. [168] They were painted in a manner that seemed as if they had studied to make themselves hideous. Many of them had the mark which indicates that they had drunk the blood of an enemy. This mark is made by rubbing the hand all over with vermillion, and by laying it on the mouth, it leaves a complete impression on the face, which is designed to resemble and indicate a bloody hand. With every band some scalps were carried, elevated on long sticks; but it was easy to perceive, on a close examination, that the scalps had been divided, to increase the apparent number. The enemy that were killed we suppose did not exceed in number seven or eight, and they had themselves lost two, so that this engagement had not been a very bloody one. As the body approached the town, the squaws and old men met them, and, excepting the lamentations [169] of those whose relatives had been killed or wounded, the expressions of joy became general, but without disturbing in the least the order of the procession. I walked into the village, which assumed a busy air. On the entrance of the party, the warriors were conducted to the different lodges, that they might refresh themselves; and the old men went among them, shaking hands with some, and seemingly bestowing praises on others, who had conducted themselves well in the battle. As the time fixed on for the departure of Mr. Hunt and his party by land was now approaching, I quitted this scene of festivity, in order to resume my employment, and returned to the camp, where I found the party busily employed in preparing for their departure, by parching and grinding corn, mixing it with sugar, and putting it in bags. I now learned that the three men who had promised to accompany me down the river had changed their minds, and on account of the now determined and inveterate hostility of the Sioux, they could not be prevailed on to venture, although I made them liberal offers. Two of them had determined to join the expedition: the other, Amos Richardson, was very anxious to descend the river, four years having elapsed since he had seen the house of a white man; but we two would not have been sufficient to navigate the boat. Notwithstanding this I commenced filling the caisettes with plants, and placed them in my [170] boat, and in the evening again walked up to the village, where I met Mr. Brackenridge, who had amused himself during the afternoon by attending to the proceedings consequent on the return of the war party. I was also met by my friend the young warrior, who invited me into his lodge, and repeated his request that I would be his guest during my stay. I gave him a few yards of printed calico and some gunpowder. In return he pressed me to accept a bow and a quiver-full of arrows. Whilst we were smoking,

his sister prepared some buffalo meat with hominy, of which we ate, and after shaking hands with him, I joined Mr. Brackenridge. In the village all kind of labour among the women was suspended: the old men were going from lodge to lodge, probably enquiring the particulars of the engagement, and bestowing praises on those who had behaved well. The tops and entrances of the lodges were adorned with the shields and
arms of the warriors, and all seemed joy and festivity, with the exception of those squaws who were mourning the loss of the killed. It may not be amiss to observe that these people had more reason to rejoice for this victory, than many European nations have had for those of infinitely more importance in appearance. For although it had not been attended with so much bloodshed as some battles in Europe have, yet it had for the present driven away an enemy, who [171] for two or three weeks had been hovering round, and threatened us all with starvation. This enemy is the oldest and the most implacable they have, and has already succeeded so far in effecting their extermination, that they are reduced from composing ten large tribes to their present number. These miscreants have been constantly their oppressors, and rob and murder them sometimes with impunity. The present number which the two villages contain is estimated at two thousand, and the warriors at five hundred, but I think it overrated. They are derived from the Parties, and are stout and well built. The men go mostly naked in summer, and when disposed to make use of a covering, it consists of only a part of a buffalo skin thrown over the shoulders, with a hole for the right arm to pass through. This can be thrown off in an instant. They scarcely ever appear without arms beyond the limits of the town. As the nature of the country renders it necessary that they should pursue their game on horseback, frequent practice renders them not only good horsemen, but also teaches them to handle their bows and strike an object with precision with their arrows, when at full speed They chiefly subsist on the buffalo, and when a herd is discovered, a considerable number of the hunters dispose themselves in a manner so as to approach as near as possible unperceived by them. This must always be done [172] with due regard to the direction of the wind, on account of the exquisite degree in which this animal possesses the sense of smelling. The instant they are perceived by the herd, they dash in amongst them, each singling out one. The horse is taught to understand and obey the wishes of his rider, although conveyed to him by the slightest movement. When he has overtaken a buffalo, he does not offer to pass it, but continues at an even pace until the arrow is discharged, when the rider singles out another immediately, if he thinks the first arrow has effected his purpose. If the horse has sufficient strength and wind to enable his rider to kill three buffaloes, he is held in great estimation. None of these would be sold by the Aricaras to Mr. Hunt. After the horses are out of breath, they pursue the wounded animals at leisure, as they separate from the herd on being wounded, and are soon left behind from weakness, occasioned by loss of blood. To produce a more copious discharge, the heads of the arrows designed to be used in hunting are much broader than those intended for war. The heads of both are flat, and of the form of an isosceles triangle; the length of the two equal sides is three times that of the base.[33] [173] In neither does the shaft of the arrow fill up the wound which the head has made; but the shaft of the hunting arrow is fluted, to promote a still greater discharge of blood. On these occasions they often kill many more than they can possibly dispose of, and it has already been observed that hunting parties are frequently followed by wolves, which profit by this wanton destruction.

The Aricaras do not provide for their horses any better than the other nations of the Missouri. They cut down the cotton wood, (*populus angulosa*) and the horses feed on the bark and smaller branches. I have seen instances exhibiting proofs that these poor animals have eaten branches two inches in diameter. The women, as is the custom with Indians, do all the drudgery, and are excellent cultivators. I have not seen, even in the United States, any crop of Indian corn in finer order, or better managed, than the corn about these villages. They also cultivate squashes, beans, and the small species of tobacco (*nicotiana rustica*.) The only implement of husbandry used by them is the hoe. Of these implements they were so destitute before our arrival, that I saw several of the squaws hoeing their corn with the blade bone of a buffalo, ingeniously fixed in a stick for that purpose.

I am not acquainted with any customs peculiar [174] to this nation, except that of having a sacred lodge in the centre of the largest village. This is called the *Medicine Lodge*, and in one particular corresponds with the sanctuary of the Jews, as no blood is on any account whatsoever to be spilled within it, not even that of an enemy; nor is any one, having taken refuge there, to be forced from it. This lodge is also the general place of

deposit for such things as they devote to the *Father of life*: but it does not seem absolutely necessary that every thing devoted shall be deposited here; for one of the chiefs, availing himself of this regulation, devoted his horse, or, in their mode of expressing it, "gave it to his medicine, " after which he could not, according to their rules, give him away. This exempted him, in respect to that particular object, from the tax which custom lays on the chiefs of this nation and most of the other nations. This will be explained by stating that generosity, or rather an indifference for self, forms here a necessary qualification in a chief. The desire to acquire and possess more than others, is thought a passion too ignoble for a brave man: it often happens, therefore, that a chief is the poorest man in the community.

In respect to their general policy as regards property, they seem to have correct ideas amongst themselves of the *meum* and *tuum*; and when the [175] generally thievish character of those we call savages is considered, the Indians of the Missouri are superlatively honest towards strangers. I never heard of a single instance of a white man being robbed, or having any thing stolen from him in an Indian village. It is true, that when they find white men trapping for beaver on the grounds which they claim, they often take from them the furs they have collected, and beat them severely with their wiping sticks; but so far is this from being surprising, that it is a wonder they do not kill them, or take away their rifles.

The chief part of their riches consists in horses, many of which are obtained from the nations southwest of them, as the Chayennes, Poncars, Panies, &c. who make predatory excursions into Mexico, and steal horses from the Spaniards. A considerable number of those bought from the Aricaras were branded, and were doubtless brought from Mexico, as the Indians do not practice branding.

There is nothing relating to the Indians so difficult to understand as their religion. They believe in a Supreme Being, in a future state, and in supernatural agency. Of the Great Spirit they do not pretend to give any account, but believe him to be the author and giver of all good. They believe in bad spirits, but seem to consider them rather [176] as little wicked beings, who can only gratify their malignity by driving away the game, preventing the efficacy of medicine, or such petty mischief. The belief in a future state seems to be general, as it extends even to the Nodowessies or Sioux, who are the furthest removed from civilization, and who do not even cultivate the soil. It is known, that frequently when an Indian has shot down his enemy, and is preparing to scalp him, with the tomahawk uplifted to give the fatal stroke, he will address him in words to this effect: "My name is Cashegra. I am a famous warrior, and am now going to kill you. When you arrive at the land of spirits, you will see the ghost of my father; tell him it was Cashegra that sent you there." He then gives the blow.

In respect to laws, I could never find that any code is established, or that any crime against society becomes a subject of inquiry amongst the chiefs, excepting cowardice or murder. The last is, for the most part, punished with death, and the nearest of kin is deputed by the council to act the part of executioner. In some tribes, I am told, this crime may be commuted. It scarcely requires to be observed, that chastity in females is not a virtue, nor that a deviation from it is considered a crime, when sanctioned by the consent of their husbands, fathers, or brothers: but in some tribes, [177] as the Potowatomies, Saukies, Foxes, &c. the breach of it, without the consent of the husband, is punished severely, as he may bite off the nose of his squaw if she is found guilty.

No people on earth discharge the duties of hospitality with more cordial good-will than the Indians. On entering a lodge I was always met by the master, who first shook hands with me, and immediately looked for his pipe: before he had time to light it, a bear-skin, or that of a buffalo, was spread for me to sit on, although they sat on the bare ground. When the pipe was lighted, he smoked a few whiffs, and then handed it to me; after which it went round to all the men in the lodge. Whilst this was going on, the squaw prepared something to eat, which, when ready, was placed before me on the ground. The squaw, in some instances, examined my dress, and in particular my mockasons: if any repair was wanting, she brought a small leather bag, in which she kept her awls and split sinew, and put it to rights. After conversing as well as we could by signs, if it was near night, I was made to understand that a bed was at my service; and in general this offer was accompanied by that of a *bedfellow*.

The two men, Jones and Carson, whom we met descending the Missouri on the 22nd of May, had [178] remained with the Aricaras during the winter, and on our return, Carson was desirous of rewarding the Indian with whom he had boarded during that period.

For that purpose he obtained some articles from Mr. Hunt, and offered them to the *savage*, who refused to accept them, and as a reason for it, observed, that *"Carson was poorer than himself. "*

I breakfasted with Mr. Lisa the day following, and found that he intended to send two of the boats purchased from Mr. Hunt to St. Louis, with skins and furs, and that Mr. Brackenridge purposed to descend with them. I knew also that in a week our party would take their departure for the Pacific Ocean. Messrs. Hunt, Crooks, and M'Kenzie invited me to go to the Pacific, and in the first instance I was inclined to accept the invitation; but finding that they could not assure me of a passage from thence to the United States by sea, or even to China, and considering also that I must sacrifice my present collection by adopting that measure, and that in passing over the Rocky Mountains, I should probably be unable to preserve or carry my specimens, I declined. There was now something of uncertainty whether Mr. Lisa would return to St. Louis in autumn, or remain during the winter.

On duly weighing all these circumstances, I resolved to return in the boats which were intended [179] to be dispatched down the river, although it did not exactly suit my views, as I had noticed a great number of species of plants on the river, that, from the early state of the season, could not then be collected advantageously. These I had reserved for my descent; but as no man would accompany me but Richardson, I applied to Mr. Lisa, informing him of my wish to descend in his boats; and on consideration of being permitted to land at certain places which I pointed out, I offered to give him my boat as a compensation. To this he readily agreed, and I commenced preparing for my departure.

It had been a matter of surprise to me on my return from Fort Mandan, to find plenty of fresh buffalo meat in our camp, although the fear of the Sioux had not yet subsided. On enquiry, I found that Mr. Hunt had hit upon an expedient which proved successful. This was to dispatch a boat up the river in the night to some miles distant, which afforded an opportunity to the hunters to procure food. This boat returned with a plentiful supply, and secured the party from starving, as a considerable portion of the Indian dogs were already consumed. I was not less surprised on learning that at least two-thirds of our Canadians had experienced unpleasant consequences from their intercourse with the squaws, notwithstanding which [180] the traffic before mentioned continued. I had been informed by Jones and Carson of the existence of this evil, but found it was of the mildest description, and that here, where the natives do not use spirituous liquors nor salt, it is not feared. I found some of the Canadians digging up roots, with which I understood they made a decoction, and used it as a drink. They mostly preferred the roots of *rudbeckia purpurea*, and sometimes they used those of *houstonia longifolia*.

This morning a circumstance came to our knowledge which gave serious alarm to Mr. Hunt and the leaders of the party. During the night a cask of gunpowder belonging to me had been stolen from amongst the baggage, and from the security of our situation, and the precautions we had taken, it was impossible the Indians could have stolen it. Our camp was situated immediately on the bank of the river; the tents, together with the men sleeping in their blankets, surrounded the baggage, and four men were constantly on guard during the night, walking round the camp in sight of each other. I had been on guard in the fore part of the night, and Mr. Crooks on the latter watch. No collusion could therefore be suspected; these and other circumstances concurred in producing a belief that some of the party intended to desert, and on examination I found that one of my trunks had been [181] opened, and a pistol, some flints, my belt, and a few shirts, taken out. In confirmation of our opinions, John Day, one of the hunters, informed Mr. Hunt of his having overheard some of the Canadians murmuring at the fatigues they had already undergone, and expressing an opinion that they should all be murdered in the journey they were going to undertake. As the safety of the party depended, in a great measure, on its strength, a diminution in the number, if considerable, might therefore defeat the enterprize; a search was made in all the neighbourhood of the camp, and even in the bank of the river, but without effect. As my boat might facilitate a desertion, I caused it to be removed to Mr. Lisa's camp, who moored it in safety with his own boats; and I employed myself, for the remainder of the day, in filling some boxes.

On account of my constant attention to plants, and being regularly employed in collecting, I was considered as the physician of the party by all the nations we saw; and

generally the *medicine men* amongst them sought my acquaintance. This day, the doctor, whom Mr. Brackenridge and I saw in the upper village, and who showed me his medicine bag, came to examine my plants. I found he understood a few French words, such as *bon, mal*, &c. I presented him with some small ornaments of silver, with which he appeared to be very much [182] pleased, and requested me to go to his lodge and smoke with him. When I entered, he spread a fine new buffalo robe for me to sit on, and showed me that it was a present, which he wished me to accept. I smoked with him, and regretted much that we could only converse by signs, and he seemed also to feel the same regret. He showed me a quantity of a plant lately gathered, and by signs informed me that it cured the cholic. It was a new species of *amorpha*. I returned to the camp, accompanied by the doctor, who very politely carried the buffalo robe for me.

On the 17th I took leave of my worthy friends, Messrs. Hunt, Crooks, and M'Kenzie, whose kindness and attention to me had been such as to render the parting painful; and I am happy in having this opportunity of testifying my gratitude and respect for them: throughout the whole voyage, every indulgence was given me, that was consistent with their duty, and the general safety. Mr. Lisa had loaded two boats with skins and furs, in each of which were six men. Mr. Brackenridge, Amos Richardson, and myself were passengers. On passing our camp, Mr. Hunt caused the men to draw up in a line, and give three cheers, which we returned; and we soon lost sight of them, as we moved at the rate of about nine miles per hour. I now found, to my great surprise, that Mr. Lisa [183] had instructed Mr. Brackenridge not, on any account, to stop in the day, but if possible, to go night and day. As this measure would deprive me of all hopes of adding to my collection any of the plants lower down the river, and was directly contrary to our agreement, I was greatly mortified and chagrined; and although I found that Mr. Brackenridge felt sensibly for my disappointment, yet I could not expect that he would act contrary to the directions given by Lisa: I had in consequence the mortification during the day, of passing a number of plants that may probably remain unknown for ages.

Our descent was very rapid, and the day remarkably fine; we had an opportunity, therefore, of considering the river more in its *tout ensemble* than in our ascent, and the changes of scenery came upon us with a succession so quick, as to keep the eye and the mind continually employed. We soon came in sight of the bluffs which border the Chayenne River, stretching as far as the eye could reach, and visible only through the low intervals in those bordering the Missouri. Before night we passed the Chayenne, and during a few moments had a view of its stream, for two or three miles above its junction with the Missouri. It is one of the largest rivers that falls into it, being at least four hundred yards wide at its mouth, and [184] navigable to a great distance. The banks appear to be more steep than those of the Missouri, and are clothed with trees to the water's edge. On both sides of the river we saw numberless herds of buffaloes, grazing in tranquillity, some of them not a quarter of a mile from us when we passed them. We continued under way until late in the evening, and encamped on an island; a measure we determined to pursue when practicable, as we knew that to fall into the hands of the Sioux would be certain death.

18th.- We set out early, and continued under way during the whole of the day without interruption, and encamped on Great Cedar Island, where a French trader, named L'Oiselle, formerly had a post or trading house. This island is about two miles in length, and chiefly covered with very fine cedar, and some rose and currant bushes, considerably overrun with vines, on which some of the grapes were already changing colour.

19th.- In the early part of the day we arrived at the upper part of the Great Bend, and continued to see innumerable herds of buffaloes on both sides of the river. I now found that although our patron, or steersman, who conducted the first boat, and directed our motions, was determined to obey strictly the orders of Lisa as regarded expedition, [185] yet from his timidity I had some hope of opportunities to collect.

Before we entirely passed the Great Bend a breeze arose, which ruffled the surface of the river: He put ashore, not daring to proceed, and we lay to during the remainder of the

day, having descended about two hundred and eighty miles in two days and a half. I determined not to lose this opportunity to add a few species to my collection, and was accompanied in my excursion by Mr. Brackenridge, who employed himself in keeping a good look out for fear of a surprise by the Sioux, a precaution necessary to my safety, as the nature of my employment kept me for the most part in a stooping posture. The track of land which is inclosed in the Bend probably contains about forty square miles, nearly level, and the soil excellent. It was at this time covered with fine grass and scattered groves of trees, betwixt which many herds of buffaloes were quietly grazing: we did not wish to disturb them, for fear of thereby enabling the Sioux to discover us.

20th.- About nine o'clock we discovered some buffaloes grazing near the edge of the river, about half a mile below us, and in such a position that we might apparently approach very near them without being discovered. We landed a little above [186] them, and approached within about sixty yards, when four of the party fired. It appeared that two were wounded, one of which fled towards the river, into which it plunged, and was immediately pursued by one of the boats, whilst the party ashore followed the other, among whom I ran, but I was much less intent on obtaining the buffalo, than on procuring some plants which I knew were to be had on the bluffs, and actually succeeded. In about half an hour the party gave up the pursuit, being unsuccessful, and returned discouraged to the place where they had left me. But as I had not gone over the bluffs, and had observed what had passed in the river, I gave them the pleasing intelligence that the boat had overtaken the other buffalo, and that the men were now employed in dragging the carcase ashore. We soon joined them, and in a few minutes the animal was skinned and cut up. It was by much the fattest we had seen, and the tallow it contained was very considerable.[34]

[187] We soon passed White River, which is inferior both in magnitude and beauty to the Chayenne, if we may judge from its mouth, where it is not more than three hundred yards wide. Soon after we passed the river, we saw a buffalo running over the bluff towards the Missouri, which put us on our guard, as we considered it a certain indication of Indians being near. Immediately below the river the vast vein of iron ore commences which has been before mentioned. I again noticed its exact conformity on both sides of the river, in point of elevation and thickness of the vein.

As the evening approached we noticed a succession of flashes of lightning, just appearing over the bluffs, on the opposite side of the river. This did not for some time excite much attention, as it was by no means an uncommon occurrence; but we soon began to apprehend impending danger, as we perceived that the storm advanced with great rapidity, accompanied with appearances truly terrific. The cloud was of a pitchy blackness, and so dense as to resemble a solid body, out of which, at short intervals, the lightning poured in a continued stream for one or two seconds. It was too late to cross the river, and, unfortunately for us, the side on which we were was entirely bounded by rocks. We looked most anxiously for some little harbour, or jutting point, behind which we might shelter [188] ourselves; but not one appeared, and darkness came on with a rapidity I never before witnessed. It was not long that any choice was left us. We plainly heard the storm coming. We stopped and fastened our boats to some shrubs, (*amorpha fruticosa*) which grew in abundance out of the clefts of these rocks, and prepared to save ourselves and our little barks if possible. At each end of the boats there was a small deck: under these we stowed our provisions, &c.: next to the decks were piled the packs of skins, secured by ropes, and in the middle a space of about twelve feet long was left for the oarsmen. Fortunately for us, we had some broad boards in each boat, designed as a defence against arrows, in case of an attack by the Sioux. These boards we placed on the gunwale of the boats, and crammed our blankets into such parts as the lightning enabled us at intervals to see did not fit closely. Before we had time to lash our boards the gale commenced, and in a few minutes the swell was tremendous. For nearly an hour it required the utmost exertion of our strength to hold the boards to their places, and before the storm abated we were nearly exhausted, as also were those who were occupied in baling. As the

river is in this place nearly a mile in breadth, and being on the lee shore, the waves were of considerable magnitude, and frequently broke over the boats. Had our fastenings given way, we must [189] inevitably have perished. When the wind abated the rain increased, and continued for the greater part of the night, during which my friend Brackenridge and myself lay on the deck, rolled up in our wet blankets, congratulating ourselves on our escape. For myself I felt but little: two years, in a great measure spent in the wilds, had inured me to hardships and inclemencies; but I felt much for my friend Brackenridge. *Poor young man*, his youth, and the delicacy of his frame, ill suited him for such hardships, which, nevertheless, he supported cheerfully.

In the morning the sun rose unobscured, which was to us extremely welcome, as its heat soon rendered us comparatively comfortable. We passed the river L'Eau qui Court, and shortly afterwards the place where we met the Poncar Indians, and as the wind began to blow fresh, we stopped five or six miles lower down, nearly at the place where I met the three Indians on the 24th of May. This enabled me to procure roots of the new species of currant, although with much pain and difficulty, having four miles at least to wade through water and mud, as the river had recently overflowed its banks. On my return to the boats, as the wind had in some degree abated, we proceeded, and had not gone more than five or six miles before we were surprised by a dull hollow sound, the cause [190] of which we could not possibly imagine. It seemed to be one or two miles below us; but as our descent was very rapid, it increased every moment in loudness, and before we had proceeded far, our ears were able to catch some distinct tones, like the bellowing of buffaloes. When opposite to the place from whence it proceeded, we landed, ascended the bank, and entered a small skirting of trees and shrubs, that separated the river from an extensive plain. On gaining a view of it, such a scene opened to us as will fall to the lot of few travellers to witness. This plain was literally covered with buffaloes as far as we could see, and we soon discovered that it consisted in part of females. The males were fighting in every direction, with a fury which I have never seen paralleled, each having singled out his antagonist. We judged that the number must have amounted to some thousands, and that there were many hundreds of these battles going on at the same time, some not eighty yards from us. It will be recollected that at this season the females would naturally admit the society of the males. From attentively observing some of the combats nearest to us, I am persuaded that our domestic bull would almost invariably be worsted in a contest with this animal, as he is inferior to him both in strength and ferocity. A shot was fired amongst them, which they did not seem to notice. Mr. Brackenridge joined me in [191] preventing a volley being fired, as it would have been useless, and therefore wanton; for if we had killed one of these animals, I am certain the weight of his carcase in gold would not have bribed us to fetch him. I shall only observe farther, that the noise occasioned by the trampling and bellowing was far beyond description. In the evening, before we encamped, another immense herd made its appearance, running along the bluffs at full speed, and although at least a mile from us, we could distinctly hear the sound of their feet, which resembled distant thunder.

The morning of the next day was very fine. We saw some buffaloes swimming, at which the men fired, contrary to our wishes, as we did not intend to stop for them. The stream was very rapid. We passed the Sulphur bluffs, and stopped a short time at Floyd's grave: shortly afterwards we arrived at the trading house opposite the Maha village, but saw no one, nor did we wish it, as Mr. Lisa had not called on the Big Elk when he ascended, who might probably be offended at his neglect. We encamped on some drift wood from necessity, not being able to get ashore. The navigation of the river had now become much more difficult, and we had in the two succeeding days some very narrow escapes. The river was considerably higher than at any former period, and from the Mahas to the River [192] Platte, is more crooked than in any other part. At every sudden turn the momentum of the boats had a continual tendency to throw them ashore on the outer bank, which it required all the skill of the steersman, and strength of the oarsmen, to prevent. In two instances we were very near being carried into the woods, in places where the river overflowed its banks. We arrived at Fort Osage, now Fort Clark, on the 27th in the afternoon, and were very politely received by Major Brownson. I had the pleasure to find that Mr. Sibley had returned a few days before from his tour to the Arkansas, to examine the vast body of salt in the neighbourhood of that river. He very politely furnished us with

extracts from his journal, which are as follows:

"After giving a number of medals to the Panie chiefs, and having various counsels with them, I left their villages on the 4th of June, and proceeded to the little Osage Camp, on the Arkansas, about seventy-five miles south, and sixteen east from the Panies, where I safely arrived on the 11th. I remained several days with the Osages, who had abundance of provisions, they having killed two hundred buffaloes within a few days. Where they had their camp, the Arkansas was about two hundred yards wide, the water shallow, rapid, and of a red colour. On the 16th, the Indians raised their camp, and proceeded towards the hilly country, on [193] the other side of the Arkansas. I continued with them about fifty miles west and thirty miles east, when we fell in with some men of the Chanier 's Band, who informed us that their camp was at no great distance, and the camp of the Big Osage still nearer. In consequence, I determined to pass through both on my way to the Grand Salines. On the 21st I rode south forty miles, east thirty, to the Big Osage camp; nearly all the warriors were at war, or abroad hunting. I was remarkably well treated by young White Hair and family; I however remained but one night with them. On the 22d I rode twenty miles south, fifteen east, to the Chanier's camp, where we arrived about one o'clock. We were well treated by the head men; and indeed, this is one of the tribes most attached to the Americans. The chief's name is Clermont. From hence it is forty miles to the Grand Salines, which we reached early on the morning of the 24th. I hasten to give you a description of this celebrated curiosity.

"The Grand Saline is situated about two hundred and eighty miles south-west of Fort Osage, between two forks of a small branch of the Arkansas, one of which washes its southern extremity; and the other, the principal one, runs nearly parallel, within a mile of its opposite side. It is a hard level plain, of reddish coloured sand, and of [194] an irregular or mixed figure. Its greatest length is from north-west to south-east , and its circumference full thirty miles. From the appearance of drift-wood that is scattered over, it would seem that the whole plain is at times inundated by the overflowing of the streams that pass near it. This plain is entirely covered in hot dry weather, from two to six inches deep, with a crust of beautiful clean white salt, of a quality rather superior to the imported blown salt: it bears a striking resemblance to a field of brilliant snow after a rain, with a light crust on its top. On a bright sunny morning, the appearance of this natural curiosity is highly picturesque: it possesses the quality of looming, or magnifying objects, and this in a very striking degree, making the small billets of wood appear as formidable as trees. Numbers of buffaloes were on the plain. The Saline is environed by a stripe of marshy prairie, with a few scattered trees, mostly of cotton wood; behind these is a range of sand hills, some of which are perfectly naked, others thinly clothed with verdure and dwarf plum bushes, not more than thirty inches in height, from which we procured abundance of the most delicious plums I ever tasted. The distance to a navigable branch of the Arkansas is about eighty miles, the country tolerably level, and the watercourses easily passed. About sixty miles south-west of this, I came to the Saline, [195] the whole of this distance lying over a country remarkably rugged and broken, affording the most romantic and picturesque views imaginable. It is a tract of about seventy-five miles square, in which nature has displayed a great variety of the most strange and whimsical vagaries. It is an assemblage of beautiful meadows, verdant ridges, and rude, mis-shapen piles of red clay, thrown together in the utmost apparent confusion, yet affording the most pleasant harmonies, and presenting us in every direction an endless variety of curious and interesting objects. After winding along for a few miles on the high ridges, you suddenly descend an almost perpendicular declivity of rocks and clay, into a series of level, fertile meadows, watered by some beautiful rivulets, and here and there adorned with shrubby cotton wood trees, elms, and cedars. These meadows are divided by chains formed of red clay and huge masses of gypsum, with here and there a pyramid of gravel: one might imagine himself surrounded by the ruins of some ancient city, and that the plain had sunk, by some convulsion of nature, more than one hundred feet below its former level; for some of the huge columns of red clay rise to the height of two hundred feet perpendicular, capped with rocks of gypsum, which the hand of time is ever crumbling off, and strewing in beautiful transparent flakes along the [196] declivities of the hills, glittering, like so many mirrors, in the sun."

Mr. Sibly also showed me a letter from his father, Dr. Sibly, of Natchitoches, informing him of a mass of native iron having been brought down the Red River, which weighed about two thousand five hundred pounds. In the fort we saw the young bears which we left there in passing up the river; they had grown surprisingly, and were quite tame, except whilst feeding, when all bears are more fierce than at other times.

28th.- After breakfasting at the fort, we set off, and encamped near where Fort Orleans formerly was situated.

29th.- About noon we came in sight of a white man's house, at Boon's Lick, when our boatmen immediately set up a shout. Soon after, some men appeared at the edge of a field of Indian corn, close to the river: they invited us ashore, and we willingly complied. In passing through the corn, I was much struck with its luxuriance: I judged it to be not less than fourteen feet high, and the ears were far above my head. It was Sunday, and when we arrived at the house, we found three women there, all dressed in clean white gowns, 1197] and being in other respects very neat, they formed a pleasing contrast to the squaws whom we had of late been in the habit of seeing. They soon spread the table for us, and produced bread, milk, and preserved fruits, which I thought the most delicious that I ever tasted. We arrived at St. Louis in safety, where I had the pleasure of shaking hands with my worthy friend, Mr. Abraham Gallatin, at whose house I slept. Early the next day, I called at the post-office, and found letters from England, informing me of the welfare of my family. This pleasing intelligence was damped by a letter from my son, who informed me that those who had agreed to furnish me with the means of prosecuting my tour, and to whom I had sent my former collection, had determined to withhold any farther supply. Early in the forenoon, my worthy and respected friend, Mr. S. Bridge, from Manchester, came to St. Louis, and invited me to take up my residence for the present with him. He informed me that during my absence he had bought a considerable quantity of land, on which he had built a house. He sent his waggon for my plants, and allotted me a piece of ground, which, with much labour, I prepared in a few days, got it surrounded by a fence, and transplanted the whole of. my collection. I found the situation of Mr. Bridge's house extremely pleasant, and his plantation of the first quality of land. Within a hundred and fifty [198] yards of his house was a small vein of coal, from twelve to eighteen inches in thickness, and rising to the surface. For this land he had paid one dollar, sixty-five cents per arpent[35], or French acre.

In about ten days after my arrival I was attacked by a bilious fever, which confined me to my bed. Its violence left me little hope of recovery. In about a month it became intermittent, and continued until the beginning of December.

During my illness a circumstance occurred, an account of which will tend to show the almost unconquerable attachment to the hunting life in those accustomed to it. It will be remembered that a man named Richardson accompanied us down the Missouri, and that it has been related of him that he had been several years in the wilderness. He had there suffered more than common hardships, having been often ill treated by the Indians, and once severely wounded by an arrow. This man, during our descent, seemed to look forward with great anxiety to the time when we should arrive in the settlements, and often declared his intention never again to adopt the hunting life. When I had been sick about three weeks, he came to see me, [199] and after some conversation, reminded me of my having mentioned a design to ascend the Arkansas River, and requested that I would admit him as my companion, if I persisted in my intention. I spoke of my doubts whether I should ever recover, and expressed my surprise at so sudden a change in his intentions. He replied, "I find so much deceit and selfishness amongst white men, that I am already tired of them. The arrow head which is not yet extracted, pains me when I chop wood, whiskey I can't drink, and bread and salt I don't care about: I will go again amongst the Indians."

Towards the latter end of November, I received a remittance from those who had previously determined to withhold it, together with a letter from the person[36] who managed the Botanic Garden at Liverpool, informing me that he had received my former collection, out of which he had secured in pots more than one thousand plants, and that the seeds were already vegetating in vast numbers. As I had now so far recovered as to be able to ride to St. Louis, I visited my friend Mr. Gallatin, and remained with him some days, during which period I often saw a young gentleman from Philadelphia, Mr. H W. Drinker, who had frequently called to see me in my sickness, and whose talents and amiable [200] manners had created in me a strong attachment to him. In a tour through the country west of the Alleghanies, he visited St. Louis, and pleased with the beauty of the place, had resided there for some months. Finding that I was determined to descend the Mississippi to New Orleans, he invited me to take my passage with him, as he purposed taking a boat down to that place, loaded with lead, of which he had a sufficient quantity. This was a very favourable opportunity, and I made every exertion my weak state would admit of, to be in readiness. A short time afterwards Mr. Drinker ascertained that some debts due to him, and contracted to be paid in lead, could not be collected until the ensuing spring: he therefore found himself necessitated to remain at St. Louis until that period. But aware of the impossibility of my detaining what yet remained of my collection till that season, he offered to buy a boat, load it with lead, and commit it to my care, with liberty to sell the lead at Orleans, or store it for his account. This kind and generous offer I gladly accepted, and in a few days a boat was procured, and her cargo put on board, amounting to about thirty thousand pounds weight of lead. Her crew consisted of five French Creoles, four of whom were oarsmen, and the fifth, who steered the boat, is called the *patron*.

[201] On the evening of the 4th of December we were in perfect readiness, when I took leave of my friends at St. Louis, several of whom, from their polite attention to me, I have reason to hold in lasting remembrance; and in addition to those I have already mentioned, I ought not to omit Mr. Josh. Charless, editor of the Missouri Gazette, whose disposition and manners gain him the esteem of all who know him: mine he will always retain. I find that I omitted stating, that in November Mr. Lisa arrived at St. Louis, and delivered me a letter from Mr. Hunt, who informed me, that after my departure from the Aricaras, whilst the men were still assembled to watch our boats descend, he addressed them on the subject of my cask of powder, which was stolen, and with such effect, that one of the Canadians came privately to his tent the night following, and informed him where it was buried in the bank of the river. Mr. Hunt caused a search to be made the day after, and found it. As Mr. Lisa was in want of powder, he bought it, and paid me for it on his return.

On the 5th of December I set off from St. Louis on the voyage to New Orleans, a distance of about one thousand three hundred and fifty miles. I was accompanied by Mr. John Bridge, whom I admitted as a passenger at the request of his brother. He purposed sailing from Orleans to the eastern [202] states. We arrived at St. Genevieve in the evening, and slept at the mouth of Gabarie, a small creek near the village, where boats trading to that place usually stop. Having some business to transact at St. Genevieve, I was detained till the afternoon of the following day. During my stay here, I became acquainted with a gentleman of the name of Longprie, a native of St. Domingo. He had a boat, in part loaded with lead, intended for Orleans. It was much wished by both of us that we should descend in company, as in case of an accident happening to one, assistance might be rendered by the other; but as he could not be ready in less than two days, I set out, intending to travel leisurely, that he might overtake me. It may be necessary to remark in this place, that the navigation of the Mississippi is attended with considerable danger, and in particular to boats loaded with lead. These, by reason of the small space occupied by the cargo, in case of striking against a planter or a sawyer, sink instantly. That these terms may be understood, it must be observed that the alluvion of the Mississippi is almost in every part covered with timber close to the edge of the river, and that in some part or other encroachments are continually made, and in particular during the time of the floods, when it often happens that tracts of some acres in extent are carried away in a few days. As in most instances a large body of earth is attached [203] to the roots of the trees, it sinks those parts to the bottom of the river, whilst the upper parts, more buoyant, rise to the surface in an inclined posture, generally with the heads of the trees pointing down the river. Some of these trees are fixed and immoveable, and are therefore termed planters. Others, although they do not remove from where they are placed, are constantly in motion: the whole tree is sometimes entirely submerged by the pressure of the stream, and carried to a greater depth by its momentum than the stream can maintain. On rising, its momentum in the other direction, causes many of its huge limbs to be lifted above the surface of the river. The period of this oscillatory motion is sometimes of several minutes duration. These are the sawyers, which are much more dangerous than the planters, as no care or caution can sufficiently guard against them. The steersman this instant sees all the surface of the river smooth and tranquil, and the next he is struck with horror at seeing just before him the sawyer raising his terrific arms, and so near that neither strength nor skill can save him from destruction. This is not figurative: many boats have been lost in this way, and more particularly those descending. From these and other risks, it is common for those carrying lead, to have a canoe with them, in which they may save themselves in case of any accident happening to the boat.

[204] Until the 14th, no occurrence happened worth noticing, excepting that we saw on the bank of the river four Indians, who beckoned to us to stop: we accordingly landed near them, and found they were Choctaws, who wanted to sell some venison and turkies. As they were acquainted with the use of money, I bought from them three turkies and two hind quarters of venison for three quarters of a dollar, being the sum they asked.

In the evening of the 14th, we arrived at New Madrid, and having occasion for some

necessaries, I bought them in the morning. I was much disappointed in this place, as I found only a few straggling houses, situated round a plain of from two to three hundred acres in extent. There are only two stores, which are very indifferently furnished. We set off about nine o'clock, and passed the Upper Chickasaw Bluffs; these bluffs are of soft sand-stone rock, of a yellow colour, but some parts being highly charged with oxyd of iron, the whole has a clouded appearance, and is considered as a curiosity by the boatmen. At the lower end of the bluffs we saw a smoke, and on a nearer approach, observed five or six Indians, and on the opposite side of the river, but lower down, we heard a dog howling. When the Indians perceived us, they held up some venison, to show us that they wished to dispose of it. Being desirous of [205] adding to our stock of fresh meat, I hastily got into the canoe, and took with me one of the men, named La France, who spoke the Chickasaw language, as I supposed the Indians to be of that nation. We very imprudently went without arms an omission that gave me some uneasiness before we reached them; especially as the boat, by my direction, proceeded leisurely on.

We found that the Indians had plenty of deer's flesh, and some turkies. I began to bargain for them, when the people in the boat fired a shot, and the dog on the other side of the river instantly ceased howling. The Indians immediately flew to their arms, speaking all together, with much earnestness. La France appeared much terrified, and told me that they said our people in the boat had shot their dog. I desired him to tell them that we did not believe that our people had done so, but if they had, I would pay them any price for him. They seemed too much infuriated to hearken to him, and surrounded us with their weapons in their hands. They were very clamorous amongst themselves, and, as I was afterwards told by La France, could not agree whether they should immediately put us to death, or keep us prisoners until we could procure goods from the boat to pay for the dog, on which it appeared they set high value. Most fortunately for us, the dog, [206] at this instant began to bark opposite to us, having run a considerable distance up the river after the shot was fired.

The tomahawks were immediately laid aside, and I bargained for half a deer, for which I gave them a quarter dollar and some gunpowder. I was not very exact in measuring the last, being rather anxious to get away, and could perceive that La France had no desire to stay any longer.

On reaching our canoe we seized our paddles, and being told by La France that we were not yet out of danger, we made every exertion to get out of their reach. When we conceived ourselves safe, we relaxed, and he told me that even when we were leaving them, they were deliberating whether they should detain us or not; some of them having remarked that the dog might be wounded. We had been so long delayed by this adventure, that it was more than an hour before we overtook the boat. I blamed the boatmen much for firing, and charged them with having fired at the dog: this, however, appeared not to have been the case, as they fired at a loon, (*mergus merganser*.) In the course of this day, we passed no fewer than thirteen arks, or Kentucky boats, going with produce to Orleans; all these we left a considerable distance behind, as they only float with the stream, and we made considerable [207] head-way with our oars. In the evening we came in view of the dangerous part of the river, called by the Americans the *Devil's Channel*, and by the French *Chenal du Diable*. It appears to be caused by a bank that crosses the river in this place, which renders it shallow. On this bank, a great number of trees have lodged; and, on account of the shallowness of the river, a considerable portion of the branches are raised above the surface; through these the water rushes with such impetuosity as to be heard at the distance of some miles.

As it would require every effort of skill and exertion to pass through this channel in safety, and as the sun had set, I resolved to wait until the morning, and caused the boat to be moored to a small island, about five hundred yards above the entrance into the channel. After supper we went to sleep as usual; and in the night, about ten o'clock, I was awakened by a most tremendous noise, accompanied by so violent an agitation of the boat that it appeared in danger of upsetting. Before I could quit the bed, or rather the skin, upon which I lay, the four men who slept in the other cabin rushed in, and cried out in the greatest terror, "*0 mon Dieu! Monsieur Bradbury, qu'est ce qu'il y a?*" I passed them with some difficulty, and ran to the door of the cabin, where I could distinctly see the [208] river

agitated as if by a storm; and although the noise was inconceivably loud and terrific, I could distinctly hear the crash of falling trees, and the screaming of the wild fowl on the river, but found that the boat was still safe at her moorings. I was followed by the men and the *patron*, who, in accents of terror, were still enquiring what it was: I tried to calm them by saying, " *Restez vous tranquil, c'est un tremblement de terre*," which term they did not seem to understand.

By the time we could get to our fire, which was on a large flag, in the stern of the boat, the shock had ceased; but immediately the perpendicular banks, both above and below us, began to fall into the river in such vast masses, as nearly to sink our boat by the swell they occasioned; and our *patron*, who seemed more terrified even than the men, began to cry out, " *0 mon Dieu! nous perirons*! " I wished to consult with him as to what we could do to preserve ourselves and the boat, but could get no answer except *"0 mon Dieu! nous perirons !"* and *"Allons à terre! Allons à terre!"* As I found Mr. Bridge the only one who seemed to retain any presence of mind, we consulted together, and agreed to send two of the men with a candle up the bank, in order to examine if it had separated from the island, a circumstance that we suspected, from hearing the [209] snapping of the limbs of some drift trees, which were deposited between the margin of the river and the summit of the bank. The men, on arriving at the edge of the river, cried out, "*Venez à terre! Venez à terre*!" and told us there was a fire, and desired Mr. Bridge and the *patron* to follow them; and as it now occurred to me that the preservation of the boat in a great measure depended on the depth of the river, I tried with a sounding pole, and to my great joy, found it did not exceed eight or ten feet.

Immediately after the shock we observed the time, and found it was near two o'clock. At about nearly half-past two, I resolved to go ashore myself, but whilst I was securing some papers and money, by taking them out of my trunks, another shock came on, terrible indeed, but not equal to the first. Morin, our *patron*, called out from the island, "*Monsieur Bradbury! sauvez vous, sauvez vous!* " I went ashore, and found the chasm really frightful, being not less than four feet in width, and the bank had sunk at least two feet. I took the candle to examine its length, and concluded that it could not be less than eighty yards; and at each end, the banks had fallen into the river. I now saw clearly that our lives had been saved by our boat being moored to a sloping bank. Before we completed our fire, we had two [210] more shocks, and others occurred during the whole night, at intervals of from six to ten minutes, but they were slight in comparison with the first and second. At four o'clock I took a candle, and again examined the bank, and perceived to my great satisfaction that no material alteration had taken place; I also found the boat safe, and secured my pocket compass. I had already noticed that the sound which was heard at the time of every shock, always preceded it at least a second, and that it uniformly came from the same point, and went off in an opposite direction. I now found that the shock came from a little northward of east, and proceeded to the westward. At day-light we had counted twenty-seven shocks during our stay on the island, but still found the chasm so that it might be passed. The river was covered with foam and drift timber, and had risen considerably, but our boat was safe. Whilst we were waiting till the light became sufficient for us to embark, two canoes floated down the river, in one of which we saw some Indian corn and some clothes. We considered this as a melancholy proof that some of the boats we passed the preceding day had perished. Our conjectures were afterwards confirmed, as we learned that three had been overwhelmed, and that all on board had perished. When the daylight appeared to be sufficient for us, I gave orders to embark, and we all went on board. Two men [211] were in the act of loosening the fastenings, when a shock occurred nearly equal to the first in violence. The men ran up the bank, to save themselves on the island, but before they could get over the chasm, a tree fell close by them and stopped their progress. As the bank appeared to me to be moving rapidly into the river, I called out to the men in the boat, "*Coupez les cordes!*" on hearing which, the two men ran down the bank, loosed the cords, and jumped into the boat. We were again on the river: the *Chenal du Diable* was in sight, but it appeared absolutely impassable, from the quantity of trees and drift wood that had lodged during the night against the planters fixed in the bottom of the river; and in addition to our difficulties, the *patron* and the men appeared to be so terrified and confused, as to be almost incapable of action. Previous to passing the channel, I

stopped that the men might have time to become more composed. I had the good fortune to discover a bank, rising with a gentle slope, where we again moored, and prepared to breakfast on the island. Whilst that was preparing, I walked out in company with Morin, our *patron*, to view the channel, to ascertain the safest part, which we soon agreed upon. Whilst we were thus employed, we experienced a very severe shock, and found some difficulty in preserving ourselves from being thrown down; another occurred during the time we were [212] at breakfast, and a third as we were preparing to re-embark. In the last, Mr. Bridge, who was standing within the declivity of the bank, narrowly escaped being thrown into the river, as the sand continued to give way under his feet. Observing that the men were still very much under the influence of terror, I desired Morin to give to each of them a glass of spirits, and reminding them that their safety depended on their exertions, we pushed out into the river. The danger we had now to encounter was of a nature which they understood: the nearer we approached it, the more confidence they appeared to gain; and indeed, all their strength, and all the skill of Morin, was necessary; for there being no direct channel through the trees, we were several times under the necessity of changing our course in the space of a few seconds, and that so instantaneously, as not to leave a moment for deliberation. Immediately after we had cleared all danger, the men dropped their oars, crossed themselves, then gave a shout, which was followed by mutual congratulations on their safety.

We continued on the river till eleven o'clock, when there was another violent shock, which seemed to affect us as sensibly as if we had been on land. The trees on both sides of the river were most violently agitated, and the banks in several places fell in, within our view, carrying with them [213] innumerable trees, the crash of which falling into the river, mixed with the terrible sound attending the shock, and the screaming of the geese and other. wild fowl, produced an idea that all nature was in a state of dissolution. During the shock, the river had been much agitated, and the men became anxious to go ashore: my opinion was, that we were much safer on the river; but finding that they laid down their oars, and that they seemed determined to quit the boat for the present, we looked out for a part of the river where we might moor in security, and having found one, we stopped during the remainder of the day.

At three o'clock, another canoe passed us adrift on the river. We did not experience any more shocks until the morning of the 17th, when two occurred; one about five and the other about seven o'clock. We continued our voyage, and about twelve this day, had a severe shock, of very long duration. About four o'clock we came in sight of a log-house, a little above the Lower Chickasaw bluffs. More than twenty people came out as soon as they discovered us, and when within hearing, earnestly entreated us to come ashore. I found them almost distracted with fear, and that they were composed of several families, who had collected to pray together. On entering the house, [214] I saw a bible lying open on the table. They informed me that the greatest part of the inhabitants in the neighbourhood had fled to the hills, on the opposite side of the river, for safety; and that during the shock, about sun-rise on the 16th, a chasm had opened on the sand bar opposite the bluffs below, and on closing again, had thrown the water to the height of a tall tree. They also affirmed that the earth opened in several places back from the river. One of the men, who appeared to be considered as possessing more knowledge than the rest, entered into an explanation of the cause, and attributed it to the comet that had appeared a few months before, which he described as having two horns, over one of which the earth had rolled, and was now lodged betwixt them: that the shocks were occasioned by the attempts made by the earth to surmount the other horn. If this should be accomplished, all would be well, if otherwise, inevitable destruction to the world would follow. FindIng him confident in his hypothesis, and myself unable to refute it, I did not dispute the point, and we went on about a mile further. Only one shock occurred this night, at half past seven o'clock. On the morning of the 18th, we had two shocks, one betwixt three and four o'clock, and the other at six. At noon, there was a violent one of very long duration, which threw a great [215] number of trees into the river within our view, and in the evening, two slight shocks more, one at six, the other at nine o'clock.

19th.- We arrived at the mouth of the river St. Francis, and had only one shock, which happened at eleven at night.

20th.- Detained by fog, and experienced only two shocks, one at five, the other at seven in the evening.

21st.- Awakened by a shock at half past four o'clock: this was the last, it was not very violent, but it lasted for nearly a minute.

On the 24th in the evening, we saw a smoke, and knowing that there were no habitations on this part of the river, we made towards it, and found it to be the camp of a few Choctaw Indians, from whom I purchased a swan, for five balls and five loads of powder.

25th.- Monsieur Longpre overtook us, and we encamped together in the evening. He was about two hundred miles from us on the night of the 15th, by the course of the river, where the earthquakes had also been very terrible. It appeared from his account, that at New Madrid the shock had been [216] extremely violent: the greatest part of the houses had been rendered uninhabitable, although, being constructed of timber, and framed together, they were better calculated to withstand the shocks than buildings of brick or stone. The greatest part of the plain on which the on which the town was situated was become a lake, and the houses were deserted.

The remainder of our voyage to Natchez was very pleasant, with the exception of two very narrow escapes from *planters* in the river. Without any occurrence that would excite much interest, we arrived at the port of Natchez on the afternoon of the 5th of January, and went to the city, which is situated about three quarters of a mile from the river, on the level behind the bluffs. The port consists of thirty or forty houses, and some stores: for the size of it, there is not, perhaps, in the world a more dissipated place. Almost all the Kentucky men stop here on the way to Orleans, and as they now consider all the dangers and difficulties of their voyage as past, they feel the same inclination to dissipation as sailors who have been long out of port, and generally remain here a day or two to indulge it. I spent a pleasant evening in the city, in company with Dr. Brown, whom I found to be a very agreeable and intelligent man.

[217] In the morning of the 6th instant I went on board the steam boat from Pittsburg; she had passed us at the mouth of the Arkansas, three hundred and forty-one miles above Natchez; she was a very handsome vessel, of four hundred and ten tons burden, and was impelled by a very powerful steam engine, made at Pittsburg, whence she had come in less than twenty days, although nineteen hundred miles distant. About eighty miles above New Orleans, the sugar plantations commenced, some of which I visited, accompanied by Mr. Longpre, who assured me that he had not seen the cane in higher perfection in any part of the West Indies. Many fields yet remained, from which the cane had not been got in: they were now covered with snow, an occurrence, as I was informed, very uncommon. From this part to New Orleans, groves of orange trees of great extent are seen on both sides of the river, and at this season, loaded with ripe fruit.

On the 13th we arrived at New Orleans, where I consigned the lead to the agent of Mr. Drinker, again met with my friend Brackenridge, and on the 20th set sail for New York.

1.
A few verses of one of their most favourite songs is annexed; and to show its frivolity to those unacquainted with the language, an imitation in English is added.

I

Derriere chêz nous, il y a un etang,
Ye, ye ment.
Trois canards s'en vont baignans,
Tous du lông de la rivière,
Legérément ma bergère,
Legérément, ye ment.

II

Trois canards s'en vont baignans,
Ye, ye ment.
Le fils du roi s'en va chassant,
Tous du lông de la rivière,
Legérément ma bergère,
Legérément, ye ment.

III

Le fils du roi s'ezi va chassant,
Ye, ye ment.
Avec son grand fusil d'argent,
Tous du lông de la rivière,
Legérément ma bergère,
Legérément, ye ment.

I

Behind our house there is a pond,
Fal lal de ra.
There came three ducks to swim thereon:
All along the river clear,
Lightly my shepherdess dear,
Lightly, fal de ra.

II,

There came three ducks to swim thereon,
Fal lal de ra.
The prince to chase them he did run
All along the river clear,
Lightly my shepherdess dear,
Lightly, fal de ra.

III

The prince to chase them he did run,
Fal lal de ra,.
And he had his great silver gun
All along the river clear,
Lightly my shepherdess dear,
Lightly, fal de ra.

2.
Populus angulosa of Michaux, called by the French Liard.- BRADBURY.

3.

This man came to St. Louis in May, 1810, in a small canoe, from the head waters of the Missouri, a distance of three thousand miles, which he traversed in thirty days. I saw him on his arrival, and received from him an account of his adventures after he had separated from Lewis and Clarke's party: one of these, from its singularity, I shall relate. On the arrival of the party on the head waters of the Missouri, Colter, observing an appearance of abundance of beaver being there,. he got permission to remain and hunt for some time, which he did in company with a man of the name of Dixon, who had traversed the immense tract of country from St. Louis to the head waters of the Missouri alone. Soon after he separated from Dixon, and trapped in company with a hunter named Potts; and aware of the hostility of the Blackfeet Indians, one of whom had been killed by Lewis, they set their traps at night, and took them up early in the morning, remaining concealed during the day. They were examining their traps early one morning, in a creek about six miles from that branch of the Missouri called Jefferson's Fork, and were ascending in a canoe, when they suddenly heard a great noise, resembling the trampling of animals; but they could not ascertain the fact, as the high perpendicular banks on each side of the river impeded their view. Colter immediately pronounced it to be occasioned by Indians, and advised an instant retreat; but was accused of cowardice by Potts, who insisted that the noise was caused by buffaloes, and they proceeded on. In a few minutes afterwards their doubts were removed, by a party of Indians making their appearance on both sides of the creek, to the amount of five or six hundred, who beckoned them to come ashore. As retreat was now impossible, Colter turned the head of the canoe to the shore; and at the moment of its touching, an Indian seized the rifle belonging to Potts; but Colter, who is a remarkably strong man, immediately retook it, and handed it to Potts, who remained in the canoe, and on receiving it pushed off into the river. He had scarcely quitted the shore when an arrow was shot at him, and he cried out, "Colter, I am wounded." Colter remonstrated with him on the folly of attempting to escape, and urged him to come ashore. Instead of complying, he instantly levelled his, rifle at an Indian, and shot him dead on the spot. This conduct, situated as he was, may appear to have been an act of madness; but it was doubtless the effect of sudden, but sound reasoning; for if taken alive, he must have expected to be tortured to death, according to their custom. He was instantly pierced with arrows so numerous, that, to use the language of Colter, "he was made a riddle of." They now seized Colter, stripped him entirely naked, and began to consult on the manner in which he should be put to death. They were first inclined to set him up as a mark to shoot at; but the chief interfered, and seizing him by the shoulder, asked him if he could run fast? Colter, who had been some time amongst the Kee-kat-sa, or Crow Indians, had in a considerable degree acquired the Blackfoot language, and was also well acquainted with Indian customs. He knew that he had now to run for his life, with the dreadful odds of five or six hundred against him, and those armed Indians; therefore cunningly replied that he was a very bad runner, although he was considered by the hunters as remarkably swift. The chief now commanded the party to remain stationary, and led Colter out on the prairie three or four hundred yards, and released him, bidding him to save himself if he could. At that instant the horrid war whoop sounded in the ears of poor Colter, who, urged with the hope of preserving life, ran with a speed at which he was himself surprised. He proceeded towards the Jefferson Fork, having to traverse a plain six miles in breadth, abounding with the prickly pear, on which he was every instant treading with his naked feet. He ran nearly half way across the plain before he ventured to look over his shoulder, when he perceived that the Indians were very much scattered, and that he had gained ground to a considerable distance from the main body; but one Indian, who carried a spear, was much before all the rest, and not more than a hundred yards from him. A faint gleam of hope now cheered the heart of Colter: he derived confidence from the belief that escape was within the bounds of possibility; but that confidence was nearly being fatal to him, for he exerted himself to such a degree, that the blood gushed from his nostrils, and soon almost covered the fore part of his body. He had now arrived within a mile of the river, when he distinctly heard the appalling sound of footsteps behind him, and every instant expected to feel the spear of his pursuer. Again he turned his head, and saw the savage not twenty yards from him. Determined if possible to avoid the expected blow, he suddenly stopped, turned round, and spread out his arms. The Indian, surprised by the suddenness of the action, and perhaps at the bloody appearance of Colter, also attempted to stop; but exhausted with running, he fell whilst end eavouring to throw his spear, which stuck in the ground, and broke in his hand. Colter instantly snatched up the pointed part, with which he pinned him to the earth, and then continued his flight. The foremost of the Indians, on arriving at the place, stopped till others came up to join them, when they set up a hideous yell. Every moment of this time was improved by Colter, who, although fainting and exhausted, succeeded in gaining the skirting of the cotton wood trees, on the borders of the fork, through which he ran, and plunged into the river. Fortunately for him, a little below this place there was an island, against the upper point of which a raft of drift timber had lodged. He dived under the raft, and after several efforts, got his head above water amongst the trunks of trees, covered over with smaller wood to the depth of several feet. Scarcely had he secured himself, when the Indians arrived on the river, screeching and yelling, as Colter expressed it, "like so many devils." They were frequently on the raft during the day, and were seen through the chinks by Colter, who was congratulating himself on his escape, until the idea arose that they might set the raft on fire. In horrible suspense he remained until night, when hearing no more of the Indians, he dived from under the raft, and swam silently down the river to a considerable distance, when he landed, and travelled all night. Although happy in having escaped from the Indians, his situation was still dreadful: he was completely naked, under a burning sun; the soles of his feet were entirely filled with the thorns of the prickly pear; he was hungry, and had no means of killing game, although he saw abundance around him, and was at least seven days journey from Lisa's Fort, on the Bighorn branch of the Roche Jaune River. These were circumstances under which almost any man but an American hunter would have despaired. He arrived at the fort in seven days, having subsisted on a root much esteemed by the Indians of the Missouri, now known by naturalists as *psoralea esculenta*.-BRADBURY.

4.
This animal in its defence discharges a few drops of a liquid so foetid that the stench can scarcely be endured by any animal. Clothes on which the smallest particle has fallen, must be buried in the earth for at least a month before they can be worn. This liquor is highly inflammable, and is secreted in a gland beneath the tail, from which it is thrown with a force that will carry it to the distance of three or four yards. Only a very few of the American dogs can be induced to attack it, and those are so powerfully affected by the horrid stench, that they continue to howl for a considerable time afterwards, and instinctively relieve themselves by scratching holes in the earth, into which they put their nose.- BRADBURY.

5.
Prairie is the term given to such tracts of land as are divested of timber. In travelling west from the Alleghanies they occur more frequently, and are of greater extent as we approach the Mississippi. When we proceed to the distance of two or three hundred miles west of that river, the whole country is of this description, which continues to the Rocky Mountains westward, and from the head waters of the Mississippi to near the Gulf of Mexico; an extent of territory which probably equals in area the whole empire of China.- BRADBURY.

6.
The term given in America to a hollow tree, containing a swarm of bees.- BRADBURY.

7.
At that time the natural history of the bee was not very well known at St. Louis. They relate there, that a French lady of that place having received a present of honey from Kaskaskias, was much delighted with it, and being told it was produced by a kind of fly, she sent a negro with a small box to Kaskaskias (60 miles) to get a pair of the flies, in order that she might obtain the breed.- BRADBURY.

8.
The great attachment which the she bear has for her young is well known to the American hunter. No danger can induce her to abandon them. Even when they are sufficiently grown to be able to climb a tree, her anxiety for their safety is but little diminished. At that time, if hunted and attacked by dogs, her first care is to make her young climb to a place of safety. If they show any reluctance, she beats them, and having succeeded, turns fearlessly on her pursuers. Perhaps in animal economy maternal affection is almost always commensurate with the helplessness of the young. -BRADBURY.

9.See Appendix, No. I.- BRADBURY.

10.
I have been informed, that when the Osages were in the habit of robbing the white settlers, it was customary with them, after they had entered the house, and before they proceeded to plunder, to blacken their faces, and cry. The reason they gave for this was, that they were sorry for the people whom they were going to rob.- BRADBURY.

11.
It is customary amongst the Missouri Indians to register every exploit in war, by making a notch for each on the handle of their tomahawks, and they are estimated as being rich or poor in proportion to the number of notches. At their war dances, any warrior who chuses may recount his exploits. This is done by pointing to each notch, and describing the particular act that entitled him to it. The Nodowessies, or Sioux, fix up a post near the war fire, to represent the enemy of each warrior in succession whilst he is recounting his deeds. During his harangue, he strikes the post when in the act of describing how he struck his enemy, and, like Alexander, "fights his battles o'er again." Mr. Crooks informed me, that the day before our arrival at the fort, he saw an Osage beating and kicking another, who suffered it patiently. Mr. Crooks asked him why he did not defend himself ? " Oh! " said he, shewing the handle of his tomahawk, " I am too poor; he is richer than I am." - BRADBURY.

12.
As the term bluff may not be understood, an explanation will render the application more intelligible. The alluvion of the great rivers west of the Alleghannies is considerably lower than the surrounding country, and is of a breadth nearly in the ratio of the magnitude of the river; that of the Missouri is from two to six or eight miles in breadth, and is for the most part from a hundred and fifty to three hundred feet below the general level of the country. The ascent from this valley into the country is precipitous, and is called "the Bluff;" it may consist of rock or clay. Betwixt these bluffs the river runs in a very crooked channel, and is perpetually changing its bed, as the only permanent bounds are the bluffs. It may here be remarked, that a view of the vast channel bounded by these bluffs, connected with the idea that all which it contained has been carried away

by the river, would induce us to believe that this globe has existed longer than some people imagine.- BRADBURY.

13.
A term given to any elevation that separates the head waters of one creek from those of another- BRADBURY.

14.
This chief, called by the French, Oiseau Noir, ruled over the Mahas with a sway the most despotic. He had managed in such a manner as to inspire them with the belief that he was possessed of supernatural powers: in council no chief durst oppose him - in war it was death to disobey. It is related of him at St. Louis, that a trader from that town arrived at the Mahas with an assortment of Indian goods: he applied to Blackbird for liberty to trade, who ordered that he should first bring an his goods into his lodge, which order was obeyed. Blackbird commanded that all the packages should be opened in his presence, and from them he selected what goods he thought proper, amounting to nearly the fourth part of the whole: he caused them to be placed in a part of the lodge distinct from the rest, and addressed the trader to this effect: - "Now, my son, the goods which I have chosen are mine, and those in your possession are your own. Don't cry, my son; my people shall trade with you for your goods at your own price." He then spoke to his herald, who ascended to the top of the lodge, and commanded, in the name of the chief, that the Mahas should bring all their beaver, bear, otter, muskrat, and other skins to his lodge, and not on any account to dispute the terms of exchange with the trader, who declared, on his return to St. Louis, that it was the most profitable voyage he had ever made. Mr. Tellier, a gentleman of respectability, who resided near St. Louis, and who had been formerly Indian agent there, informed me that Blackbird obtained this influence over his nation by the means of arsenic, a quantity of that article having been sold to him by a trader, who instructed him in the use of it. If afterwards any of his nation dared to oppose him in his arbitrary measures, he prophesied their death within a certain period, and took good care that his predictions should be verified. He died about the time that Louisiana was added to the United States; having previously made choice of a cave for his sepulchre, on the top of a hill near the Missouri, about eighteen miles below the Maha village. By his order his body was placed on the back of his favourite horse, which was driven into the cave, the mouth of which was then closed up with stones. A large heap was afterwards raised on the summit of the hill.- BRADBURY.

15.
The Indians are remarkable for strength of memory in this particular. They will remember a man whom they have only transiently seen, for a great number of years, and perhaps never during their lives forget him. I had no recollection of these Indians, but they pointed down the river to St. Louis: afterwards they took up the comer of the buffalo robe, held it before their faces, and turned it over as a man does a newspaper in reading it. This action will be explained by relating that I frequented the printing-office of Mr. Joseph Charless, when at St. Louis, to read the papers from the United States, when it often happened that the Indians at that place on business came into the office and sat down. Mr. Charless, out of pleasantry, would hand to each a newspaper, which, out of respect for the custom of the whites, they examined with as much attention as if they could read it, turning it over at the same time that they saw me turn that with which I was engaged.- BRADBURY.

16.
See Appendix, No. II.- BRADBURY.

17.
When a party on a war excursion are entirely foiled in their object, a dread of the scoffs which may be expected from their tribe, renders them furious; and it often happens in such cases, that they throw away their clothes, or devote them to the Great Spirit, with an intention to do some desperate act. Any white man, or any party of whites, whom they meet and can overcome, is almost certain to be sacrificed in this case.- BRADBURY.

18.
A species of *sciurus* or squirrel, not described in the Syst. Natura. - BRADBURY.

19.
The Americans are called "the Big Knives" by the Indians of the Missouri- BRADBURY.

20.
One thousand and seventy-five miles from the mouth of the Missouri. - BRADBURY.

21.
This man has been suffered to examine the collection of specimens which I sent to Liverpool, and to describe almost the whole, thereby depriving me both of the credit and profit of what was justly due to me.- BRADBURY.

22.

In the statistical account of the Missouri, by Lewis, read before Congress in February, 1806, the character of these Indians is thus described: - “These are the vilest miscreants of the savage race, and must ever remain the pirates of the Missouri, until such measures are pursued by our government as will make them feel a dependence on its will for their supply of merchandize. Unless these people are reduced to order by coercive measures, I am ready to pronounce that the citizens of the United States can never enjoy, but partially, the advantages which the Missouri presents. Relying on a regular supply of merchandize through the channel of the river St. Peter's, they view with contempt the merchants of the Missouri, whom they never fail to plunder when in their power. Persuasion or advice with them is viewed as supplication, and only tends to inspire them with contempt for those who offer either. The tameness with which the traders of the Missouri have heretofore submitted to their rapacity, has tended not a little to inspire them. with a poor opinion of the white persons who visit them through that channel. A prevalent idea, and one which they make the rule of their conduct, is, that the more harshly they behave towards the traders, the greater the quantity of merchandize they will bring them, and that they will obtain the articles they wish on better terms. They have endeavoured to inspire the Aricaras with similar sentiments, but happily without effect." - BRADBURY.

23.

It may be observed here, that all the Indians who inhabit the prairie use shields in war; but to those who inhabit a woody region they are wholly unknown: as in action, excepting in close fight, each man conceals himself behind a tree. The shields made use of are circular, and are nearly thirty inches in diameter. They are covered with three or four folds of buffalo skin, dried hard in the sun, and are proof against arrows, but not against a bullet.- BRADBURY.

24.

An enquiry into the length of time which it has required to produce this effect, might be a matter of great interest to the *Chinese* philosophers. BRADBURY.

25.

During the autumn, whilst the Indians are employed in killing game for their winter's stock, the wolves associate in flocks, and follow them at a distance to feed on the refuse of the carcasses; and will often sit within view, waiting until the Indians have taken what they chuse, and abandoned the rest.- BRADBURY.

26.

During our voyage, I often associated with the hunters, to collect information from their united testimony, concerning the nature and habits of animals, with which no men are so well acquainted. This knowledge is absolutely necessary to them, that they may be able to circumvent or surprise those which are the objects of chase, and to avoid such as are dangerous; and likewise to prevent being surprised by them. They can imitate the cry or note of any animal found in the American Wilds, so exactly, as to deceive the animals themselves. I shall here state a few of what I certainly believe to be facts; some I know to be so, and of others I have seen strong presumptive proofs. The opinion of the hunters, respecting the sagacity of the beaver, goes much beyond the statements of any author whom I have read. They state that an old beaver, who has escaped from a trap, can scarcely ever afterwards be caught, as travelling in situations where traps are usually placed, he carries a stick in his mouth, with which he probes the sides of the river, that the stick may be caught in the trap, and thus saves himself.

They say also of this animal, that the young are educated by the old ones. It is well known that in constructing their dams, the first step the beaver takes, is to cut down a tree that shall fall across the stream intended to be dammed up. The hunters in the early part of our voyage informed me, that they had often found trees near the edge of a creek, in part cut through and abandoned; and always observed that those trees would not have fallen across the creek, and that by comparing the marks left by the teeth on those trees, with others, they found them much smaller; and therefore not only concluded that they were made by young beavers, but that the old ones, perceiving their error, had caused them to desist. They promised to show me proofs of this, and during our voyage I saw several, and in no instance would the trees, thus abandoned, have fallen across the creek.

I have myself witnessed an instance of a doe, when pursued, although not many seconds out of sight, so effectually hide her fawn, that we could not find it although assisted by a dog. I mentioned this fact to the hunters, who assured me that no dog, nor perhaps any beast of prey, can follow a fawn by the scent, and showed me in a full grown deer, a gland and a tuft of red hair, situated a little above the hind part of the fore foot, which had a very strong smell of musk. This tuft they call the scent, and believe that the route of the animal is betrayed by the effluvia proceeding from it. This tuft is mercifully withheld until the animal has acquired strength. What a benevolent arrangement! -BRADBURY.

27.

It was not difficult to comprehend that horses might be obtained by stealing, but how they could be procured by smoking I did not then understand. On the first opportunity, I enquired from Mr. Crooks, who is remarkably well acquainted with Indian customs: from him I learned, that it is a practice with tribes in amity to apply to each

other in cases of necessity. When one tribe is deficient in any article of which the other has abundance, they send a deputation, who smoke with them, and inform them of their wants. It would be a breach of Indian courtesy to send them away without the expected supply.- BRADBURY.

28.

The nations on the Missouri, always liable to be surprised and plundered by the Teton villains, annually conceal a quantity of corn, beans, &c. after harvest, in holes in the ground, which are artfully covered up. These hoards are called by the French caches, from the verb cacher, to hide. BRADBURY.

29.

Cannon-ball River derives its name from the singularly round form of the stones which are found in its bed. These are of all sizes, from one to twelve inches in diameter, or sometimes more: they are of a brownish sand-stone, and before they were rounded by attrition, must have been formed in cubes.- BRADBURY.

30.

This is about the full height to which the maize grows in the Upper Missouri, and when this circumstance is connected with the quickness with which it grows and is matured, it is a wonderful instance of the power given to some plants to accommodate themselves to climate. The latitude of this place is about forty-seven degrees geographically, but geologically many degrees colder, arising from its elevation, which must be admitted to be very considerable, when we consider that it is at a distance of more than three thousand miles from the ocean by the course of a rapid river. This plant is certainly the same species of zea that is cultivated within the tropics, where it usually requires four months to ripen, and rises to the height of twelve feet. Here ten weeks is sufficient, with a much less degree of heat. Whether or not this property is more peculiar to plants useful to men, and given for wise and benevolent purposes, I will not attempt to determine. -BRADBURY.

31.

I noticed over their fires much larger vessels of earthenware than any I had before seen, and was permitted to examine them. They were sufficiently hardened by the fire to cause them to emit a sonorous tone on being struck, and in all I observed impressions on the outside, seemingly made by wicker work. This led me to enquire of them by signs how they were made ? when a squaw brought a basket, and took some clay, which she began to spread very evenly within it, shewing me at the same time that they were made in that way. From the shape of these vessels, they must be under the necessity of burning the basket to disengage them, as they are wider at the bottom than at the top. I must here remark, that at the Great Salt Lick, or Saline, about twenty miles from the mouth of the Wabash, vast quantities of Indian earthenware are found, on which I have observed impressions exactly similar to those here mentioned. From the situation of these heaps of fragments, and their proximity to the salt works, I am decidedly of opinion that the Indians practised the art of evaporating the brine, to make salt, before the discovery of America. - BRADBURY.

32.

The bows are short, but strong. Those which are esteemed the best, are made of the horns of the animal called by the French *gros corne*. This animal inhabits the Rocky Mountains, and is gregarious. All who have seen it, represent its agility in leaping from rock to rock as one of the most surprising things they ever beheld. The Americans call it the mountain sheep; but the probability is that it belongs to the genus antelope. The horns are exceedingly large for the size of the animal. The bows are made of three pieces, very neatly joined together by a long splice, and wound round with sinew in a very exact manner. The next in value, and but little inferior, are made of a yellow wood, from a tree which grows on Red River, and perhaps on the Arkansas. This wood is called *bois jaune*, or *bois d'arc*. I do not think the tree has yet been described, unless it has been found lately in Mexico. I have seen two trees of this species in the garden of Pierre Chouteau, in St. Louis, and found that it belongs to the class *dioecia*; but both of the trees being females, I could not determine the genus. The fruit is as large as an apple, and is rough on the outside. It bleeds an acrid milky juice when wounded, and is called by the hunters the Osage orange. The price of a bow made from this wood at the Aricaras is a horse and a blanket. Many of the war clubs are made of the same kind of wood, and have the blade of a knife, or some sharp instrument, fastened at the end, and projecting from four to six inches, forming a right angle with the club.- BRADBURY.

33.

Before the Indians had any intercourse with the whites, they made the heads of their arrows of flint or horn stone. They now purchase them from the traders, who cut them from rolled iron or from hoops.- BRADBURY.

34.

I am informed by the hunters, that in autumn the quantity of tallow or fat in the buffalo is very great. It of course diminishes when food becomes scarce. As the same thing obtains in a number of animals, by climate and

habit ordained to procure abundance of food in summer, and to suffer great privation in winter, this collection of fat seems to be a kind of reservoir, containing the means of existence, which is drained by absorbent vessels, and returned into the system when necessary- BRADBURY.

35.

The arpent is to the statute acre nearly in the proportion of eighty-three to one hundred.- BRADBURY.

36.

This man's name is Shepherd.- BRADBURY.